

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XIV, Issue No. 133

WEDNESDAY MAY 12, 2004

www.saipantribune.com 50¢

Partial tally of Saipan votes show GMA ahead

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

Unofficial partial results show Philippine president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo leading the Asian country's absentee voting on Saipan.

A total of 4,740 out of 7,003 registered Filipino voters cast their ballots at the Nauru Building in Susupe, which translates to a voter turnout percentage of 67.68.

The CNMI chapter of the National Movement for Free Elections, a non-profit Philippine election watchdog, released the ranking of candidates based on its unofficial "quick count operations." Namfrel-CNMI chairman Bong Sese said the ranking covered 4,320 votes.



Arroyo

Trailing behind Arroyo in the presidential race is opposition candidate Fernando Poe Jr., followed by Sen. Panfilo Lacson. Former Education Secretary Raul Roco follows, then religious leader Eddie Villanueva.

In the vice presidential race, Noli de Castro leads over Loren Legarda. Both are broadcasters and senators in the Philippines.

The top 12 senatorial candidates include Alfredo Lim, Mar Roxas, Richard Gordon, Bong Revilla, Orly Mercado, Robert Barbers, Lito Lapid, Rudolfo Biazon, Aquilino Pimentel, Miriam Santiago, Pia Cayetano and Boots Anson-Roa.

Filipino volunteers affiliated with the Philippines' Commission on Elections, political parties and Namfrel vigilantly took their respective posts since Monday night when the counting of votes began. As of press time, the official tally of votes has yet to be released by the Comelec.

The Saipan election process is part of the newly implemented absentee voting

See PARTIAL on Page 8

Crimes vs elderly increasing

By SHAN SEMAN
REPORTER

Statistics provided by the Department of Public Safety showed that 393 elderly citizens in the CNMI were victims of crimes in 2003—an increase of about 18.4 percent compared with the numbers posted in 2002, which had 332 criminal acts against the elderly.

This year, criminal acts against the elderly have already reached 113 as of May 1.

The elderly is defined as those 55 years old and above.

According to DPS commissioner Edward Camacho, majority of the crimes fall into the domestic violence category and that more crimes are occurring in the CNMI but are not reported.

"I believe that for every 10 cases reported where elders are the victims, there are a hundred more not being reported," he said in an interview in yesterday's Conference on Aging at the Hibiscus Hall of the Dai-ichi Hotel Saipan Beach. "Some don't want to talk and report the crime, and one of the reasons for that is some of the perpetrators are actual family members, and that's sad."

This, Camacho said, only underscores the importance of educating senior citizens about their rights and privileges.

See CRIMES on Page 8



SHAN SEMAN

Senior citizens listen to presenters during yesterday's 2004 Conference on Aging at the Hibiscus Hall of the Dai-ichi Hotel Saipan Beach.

April hotel occupancy goes up

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

The hotel industry's average occupancy rate went up by about 30 percent in April compared with year-ago figures.

The Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands posted an aver-

age occupancy rate of 64.81 percent in April this year, higher than April 2003's 51.84 percent.

HANMI chairman Ronald D. Sablan said that, with close to 40,000 inbound tourists visiting the islands last month, visitor arrivals improved by roughly 25 to 30 percent.

Occupancy rate improved even if the average room rate for the month slightly increased to \$79.24 compared with April 2003's \$73.64.

Composed of 15 member hotels for a total room number of 2,588, HANMI attributed the growth in occupancy to

See APRIL on Page 8

Grotto to undergo makeover

By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO
REPORTER

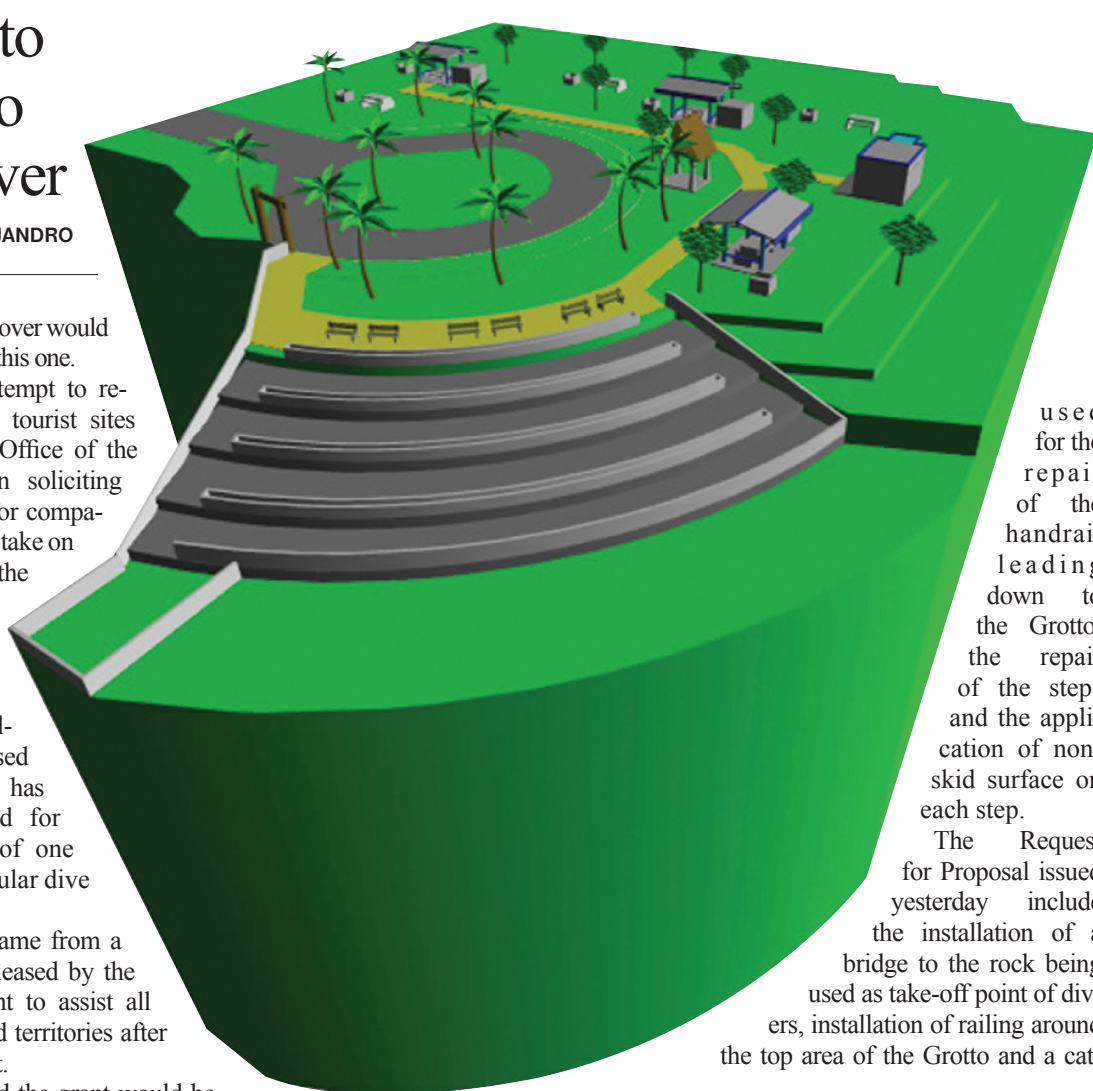
Reality TV makeover would have nothing on this one.

In another attempt to refurbish existing tourist sites on Saipan, the Office of the Governor began soliciting bids yesterday for companies that want to take on the facelift of the Grotto Park in Marpi.

Public information officer Peter Callaghan disclosed that \$200,000 has been earmarked for the makeover of one of the most popular dive sites on Saipan.

The money came from a federal grant released by the U.S. government to assist all insular areas and territories after the 9/11 incident.

Callaghan said the grant would be



used for the repair of the handrail leading down to the Grotto, the repair of the steps and the application of non-skid surface on each step.

The Request for Proposal issued yesterday include the installation of a bridge to the rock being used as take-off point of divers, installation of railing around the top area of the Grotto and a cat-

See GROTTA on Page 8

NMI to open offices in 3 China cities

By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO
REPORTER

Gov. Juan N. Babauta has approved the release of \$300,000 for the establishment of promotional offices in three key cities in mainland China in anticipation of an upswing in tourist arrivals from that country.

According to public information officer Peter Callaghan, the governor approved the creation of the marketing offices in Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou, which would be used as centers for the dissemination of information about the Northern Marianas.

The offices will be responsible in ensuring that the Northern Marianas—Saipan, Tinian, and Rota—is marketed as a destination of choice.

While the CNMI office in Hong Kong would monitor activities and promotional opportunities in Hong Kong and Taiwan, the offices in the People's Republic of China would focus on driving marketing activities to boost the CNMI tourism industry.

See NMI on Page 8

Local

EMO to hold full-scale anti-terror drill

By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO
REPORTER

Basic training on what to do in the event of a weapons of mass destruction attack will go down to the community level when the Emergency Management Office takes the exercise to the streets and harbor of Saipan for a full-scale anti-terror training this month.

The EMO, in coordination with the EG&G Technical Services, has scheduled a full-scale weapons of mass destruction

and anti-terrorism exercise on May 26 at Saipan's multi-million dollar harbor.

Press information officer Peter Callaghan advised the community not to be alarmed when the EMO and other related departments and agencies conduct reality-based and immediate response operations at the Saipan seaport.

"The exercise has been dubbed 'Operation Safe Har-



Callaghan

bor,' and will test the real-time response of the participating departments, agencies, and organizations of the CNMI and federal partners in case of a terror attack," said Callaghan.

According to EMO director Rudy Pua, the exercise is part of a building-block approach that all first responders are taking to prepare the CNMI in case of a terrorist act.

In July 2003, the EMO and

the Commonwealth Ports Authority-Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting division, along with other related agencies, conducted a table-top exercise to help agencies develop their response plans.

"In two weeks, we are going to practice the real thing to let the responders get hands-on training in a simulated terrorist action," said the EMO director.

Pua also warned the public of increased activity by Public Safety and Public Health officials, but assured that

there is no need for alarm.

"The goals of Operation Safe Harbor are to validate the CNMI Emergency Operations Plan, Terrorism Response Annex, and Hazardous Material

procedures. The evaluators will also look at the community and local entities' roles, responsibilities, and plans and procedures in response to an act of WMD/terrorism," he stressed.



Rangamar

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK
Giving back to
the community

By SHAN SEMAN
REPORTER

As a child attending Hopwood Junior High School, Sylvan M. Rangamar already wanted to be a police officer and would voluntarily join the law enforcement program offered at the school.

Fast forward 23 years to today, he is now known as Sgt. Sylvan Rangamar of the Department of Public Safety Traffic Section.

"It's a commitment that I've made to our community since I was sworn in and given a badge," he said. "It is a way for me to give back to the community and try to make an impact and provide safety...the best that I can."

Despite the negative comments that the officers sometimes get, Rangamar said he understands the responsibilities and "everything else that comes with the job."

"In the academy, you learn a lot about discipline, and that's very important for all officers," he said. "We have to expect the unexpected because we're exposed to anything, from good to bad. Sometimes people would be swearing, but as officers of the law, all we have to do is swallow it and do the job the best that we can. Remember,

the department didn't call us, we came on our own."

Rangamar decided to enroll in the 6th Cycle Police Academy in 1987 on the advice of his grandfather, soon after returning from college in Hawaii.

Before joining the Traffic Section, Rangamar worked under several divisions, including the Division of Corrections, Patrol Section, and the Criminal Investigation Bureau. He was also part of the Tactical Response Enforcement Team, the local DPS Swat team.

Rangamar was recently recognized as a Division Employee of the Year during the Public Service Recognition Week. He is among the few eligible for the Department Employee of the Year, which will be announced on Labor Day.

Rangamar acknowledged that his family has a lot to do with his successful career, and that their support throughout the years is "very much appreciated."

"I would like to thank my family because they've been very understanding and supportive throughout my career," he said. "They understand my schedule, even though sometimes I work 16 hours a day and don't return home until 10pm or 11pm. They have been very supportive and I thank them."

mazda
cmyk

Yumul OKs Labor Act task force

By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO
REPORTER

House Rep. Ray Yumul yesterday approved the creation of a task force that would study the effects of the proposed Alien Workers Act of 2004.

Yumul said he is also reviewing all comments that the Commerce and Tourism committees received during Monday’s public hearing on the proposed bill. Among those that submitted comments were the Attorney

General’s Office, Department of Labor, U.S. Labor Ombudsman, Saipan Chamber of Commerce, Saipan Garment Manufacturing Association, Hotel Association of NMI, and various Filipino organization.

He said the comments will be considered in drafting a more thorough and accurate nonresident labor law, which would affect at least 30,000 alien workers in the Commonwealth.

The congressman is optimistic that a compromise could be

reached so that a policy change relating to the nonresident workforce in the CNMI could be carried out in the near future.

The task force, once created, would look into the fiscal impact of the proposed Alien Workers Act of 2004, particularly its effect on the total revenue, tax contributions, and others. Also, it would review the comments submitted by the different agencies.

The AGO, DOL, Labor Ombudsman, and the Chamber had all agreed that a detailed fiscal impact study should be undertaken to look into the effects of the measure.

According to Attorney General Pamela Brown, her office is con-

cerned about the fiscal effect that the significant changes contained within House Bill 14-142 will have on other government services, including labor, immigration, and criminal enforcement.

“As explained, the measure appears to increase the need for enforcement efforts, with an increase in the nonresident worker population, while simultaneously making certain enforcement actions more difficult,” Brown said.

She also urged the House of Representatives to consider these factors when evaluating the measure, and to refrain from adopting this and any other similar legislation before a detailed fiscal impact study is done.

The AGO proposed that officers from the AGO; Labor, Commerce, and Finance departments; Legislature, and individuals with technical expertise should be included in the task force.

The bill, Alien Workers Act of 2004, seeks to amend chapters 4 through 8 of Division 4, Title 3 of the CNMI Code. The bill intends to provide stricter enforcement, control and regulation of alien workers.

Among others, it aims:

- to require residents workers to be at least 10 percent of every employers’ management, supervisory, and nonsupervisory work force, to be increased at least 2 percent annually. The

move is to control the issuance of temporary work permits and to increase job referral services provided to residents.

- to prohibit the transfer of alien workers from one employer to another and to repatriate nonresident worker to the point of hire. “It is the intent of the Act to prohibit the alien worker from working for more than one employer,” reads the bill.
- to lift the moratorium on the hiring of alien workers except in the garment industry.
- to prohibits transfer from one employer to another at any time. Upon termination, non-renewal, or expiration of the employment contract, the alien worker shall exit the CNMI.

HANMI dismayed over scattered trash

The Hotel Association of the Northern Marianas Islands has expressed concerns over trash haulers driving to the Marpi landfill with their garbage not properly covered. This causes the wind to blow the trash off the trucks and scatter them along the Tanapag Road, where three HANMI members are located.

In a letter to Public Safety Commissioner Edward C. Camacho, HANMI chair Ronald Sablan asked that the Tanapag Road be constantly monitored to ensure that haulers observe proper safety rules.

Sablan also wrote a similar letter to Public Works Secretary Juan S. Reyes, Environmental Quality Director John I. Castro Jr. and Coastal Resource Management Director Joaquin D. Salas “to please work hand in hand to address the issue.”

“While we appreciate the government’s effort to have the landfill finally opened, we believe that some collateral is-

ssues need to be addressed, foremost of which is the failure of these haulers to properly cover their truck beds such that trash does not get blown away and be left on the road and nearby vicinities.

“Please find time to drive by that road and see for yourself what we mean; garbage strewn all over the place pose health risks. At the same time, they make for an ugly site which is contrary to how we promote the CNMI abroad: a pristine environment,” said Sablan.

He said that since the landfill opened several months ago, the Tanapag Road has been busy with trash haulers and motorists going to the site to dispose of their garbage.

“We believe that there is a regulation in the books that requires haulers to properly cover their load for road safety purposes. Thus, we propose that DPS assign a regular patrol on the area and be on the watch for these haulers,” said Sablan.

Fire destroys house in Dandan

A family living in the Dandan homestead area has been rendered homeless after a fire gutted their house Sunday morning.

The head of the household, 44-year-old Jose Alex Joseph, and his family were not at the house when the fire started as they were heading to San Vicente Church for Mass.

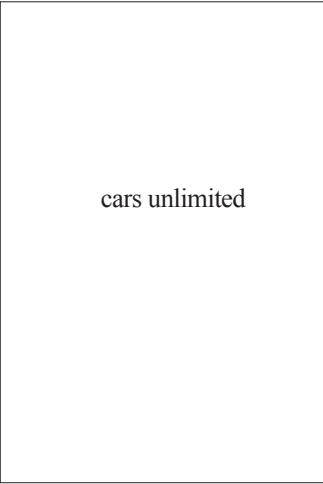
According to Department of Public Safety public information officer Thomas A. Blas Jr., the victim was not aware of the fire until a man informed him that he was needed at his

house because of the incident.

A call reporting the incident was placed at 8:17am.

Bystanders and neighbors helped in putting out the flames. It was not immediately known how soon the fire was extinguished. Commonwealth Utilities Corp. personnel also cut off the electricity to the area to slow down the spread of the flames.

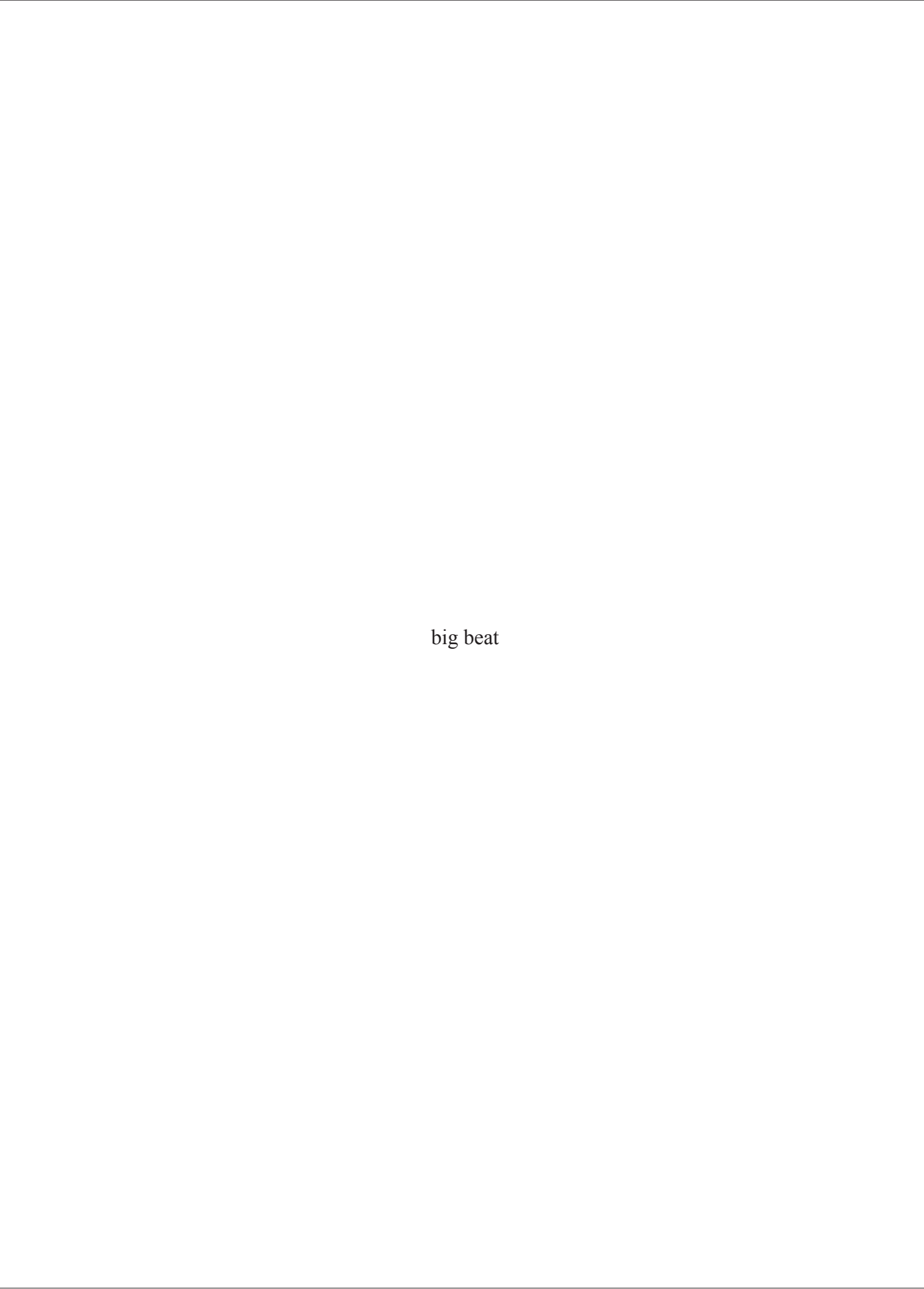
Initial investigation showed that an electrical malfunction started the fire. The case was placed under further investigation. *(Shan Seman)*



cars unlimited



pierre rest.



big beat

Fund, PSS oppose proposed board reform act

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

At least two boards—the NMI Retirement Fund Board of Trustees and the Board of Education—are opposing the bill that aims to convert boards into mere advisory bodies, vests management and operations authority solely on executives, and makes the executive posi-

tion an appointive position by the governor.

“We will not support it. We’ll object to that bill,” said Fund board chair Joseph C. Reyes in a recent board meeting.

Fund administrator Karl T. Reyes said reducing the board into an advisory body would be difficult for the Fund since it deals with huge financial transactions.

“These are not simple matters that the board could just advise us on. There is a need for a board that has authority to govern, to set the direction and operations of the Fund,” said Reyes.

House Bill 14-154, titled Public Corporation Act of 2004, aims to convert the function of the boards of public corporations, authorities, and commissions to that of an advisory body.

It seeks to vest the management and operations of such entities to designated executives who shall be appointed by the governor (instead of the board) with the consent of the Senate.

The bill, authored by former Commonwealth Utilities Corp. executive director Rep. Timothy Villagomez, removes the Fund’s board’s function as a governing body responsible for the direction and operation of the affairs and business of the Fund.

The existing provision, which says “title to all assets

of the Fund shall be held for the Fund by the board or its qualified agents or custodians” is also removed.

The proposed bill scraps the board’s authority to exercise “all powers vested in the Fund.”

Meantime, the Board of Education said that, although the proposal does not directly concern the BOE (since it is not identified in the bill), it expressed concern that it would curtail the autonomy of agencies.

BOE member Herman T.

Guerrero said it would “neutralize” the boards.

“It’s a constitutional issue. I’m not sure why they came up with this. Perhaps they want to neutralize all boards,” said Guerrero.

Aside from the NMIRF board, the bill also affects the functions of the boards for the Commonwealth Ports Authority, Marianas Visitors Authority, CUC, Northern Marianas Housing Authority, and Commonwealth Telecommunications Commission.

EMO warns of bombing runs on FDM

The U.S. military will be conducting live fire bombing exercise on the island of Farallon De Mendenilla and the Emergency Management Office is warning people to stay away from the area.

The bombing runs would be held on May 10 to 16, from 7am to 11pm.

The general location of this activity will be on the island of

Farallon De Mendenilla training area (R7201) from 15,000 feet mean sea level on a 10 nautical mile radius on all quadrants.

Due to the danger posed by this activity, the EMO said the public, especially fishermen, commercial pilots, and tour operators, are advised to stay away from this site during the time and dates indicated.

“The cooperation and under-

standing of the general public is greatly appreciated. Sorry for any inconvenience this may have cause,” the agency said in a statement.

For more information, call the EMO Operations Section at 322-9529/8001-3, Ext. 23, 24, 31, VHF Marine CHNL 16, Single Side Band Radio on 5.205.0, or visit the website at www.cnmiemo.org.

Family literacy goes on TV today

The Northern Marianas Family Literacy Consortium will spearhead a discussion on Family Literacy with John Gonzalez on KMCV’s Channel 7 today, May 12. NMFLC president Jonas Barcinas will be leading the group.

This is in line with the celebration of Family Literacy Month.

Barcinas said everyone is invited to watch and listen to the program, which will feature CNMI experts and advocates of family literacy, including:

- Rita Sablan, PSS Associate Commissioner;
- Janice Sablan, Director, Children’s Library, Joeten-Kiyu Public Library and Library

Friends representative;

□ Fe Y. Calixterio, Director, Adult Basic Education, NMC. She is founder and adviser of the NMFLC;

□ Janet Cambronero Villagomez, Principal, San Vicente Elementary School. She is co-chair of the NMFLC Grant Writing Committee;

□ Steve Smith, PSS Language Coordinator and co-chair of the NMFLC Grant Writing Committee;

□ Mary Binauea, Coordinator, Motherread/Fatheread Literacy. She is a teacher at the Dandan Elementary School and a member of the NMFLC;

□ Agnes Aldan, Administra-

tive Officer, Adult Basic Education, NMC

□ Lydia Villagomez, ABE Teacher at the Dandan Elementary School. She will be accompanied by two parents who will share their experiences as participants of the DES Family Literacy Program.

A representative from the DCCA’s Common Sense Parenting might also be participating.

For more information, contact any of the following coordinators: Jonas Barcinas jmbarcinas66@vzpacific.net or Concepcion Lomibao-Van Der Veen, NMFLC Secretary and KES Teacher nanay5mp@yahoo.com.

fhb

Bartenders showdown this Saturday

Topnotch bartenders from Saipan will slug it out for a year’s worth of bragging rights and \$200 when the annual Bartenders Cocktail Competition unfolds at the American Memorial Park this Saturday as part of the Taste of the Marianas festivities.

The contest will be held at the park’s Bell Tower Field from 6:30pm to 8:30pm.

A total of 12 bartenders from various hotels and restaurants have confirmed participating in the event that will feature a \$200 prize for the champion, \$100 for the first runner-up, \$50 for the second runner-up, and \$100 for whoever reigns supreme in the Best in Show category.

Hotels and restaurants represented at the competition are Marianas Hotel, Nikko Hotel,

Aqua Resort Club, Hyatt Regency Saipan, Hafa Adai Hotel, World Resort Hotel, Grand Hotel, Pacific Gardenia Hotel, Tambayan Restaurant and Bar, and Sunset Bar.

Each bartender has a five-minute time limit. Each must use a jigger, local ingredients, and each recipe must include Two Fingers Tequila.

Participants, however, are not allowed to wear any uniform or logos tying them to a company, cannot use concocted ingredients such as ice cream and chocolate syrup, and cannot use non-edible garnish or decoration that will touch the drinks.

Participants must also bring the equipment that would be needed for presentation, must prepare one drink for display and another three for tasting.

According to NMI Bartenders Association president Lito Espino, the competition is being held to showcase the talents, skills and techniques of bartenders in presenting creative and artistic cocktail drinks.

“The competition is geared toward building self-confidence, pride and professionalism among bartenders and to develop a more competitive attraction to tourist here in CNMI,” he said. “The competition will showcase the expertise of the bartenders through the art of making fine cocktails.”

The event is sponsored by the Marianas Visitors Authority, Budweiser MARPAC, MC-Asia International, and Western Sales Trading. The theme of this year’s competition is “The Marianas Islands.” *(Shan Seman)*

hope, strength
and joy!



MAKE-A-WISH.

Visit us at:
249 W. Rte. 8, Ste. 107
Hagatña, Guam 96911
Tel: (671) 714-9474/5
Fax: (671) 714-7718
Email: makeawish@tcn.net

Opinion

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XIV, Issue No. 133

Published daily at 2/F Century Insurance Building,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

John Pangelinan PUBLISHER
Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

PhDs, and plumbers too

It's good to see the problem of school dropouts entering the political debate. Dropouts, unlike soccer moms and NASCAR dads, don't wield much political clout, so John Kerry deserves credit for his campaign pledge to reduce the nation's dropout rate. The platform he unveiled last week includes a promise to increase funding for tutoring, teacher training and the creation of small high schools where struggling students won't fall through the cracks. Those are good ideas, but not enough. Any solution ought to include an expansion of vocational education—which has all but disappeared—because not every student is headed for college, and a carpenter these days has a more confident future than a computer programmer.

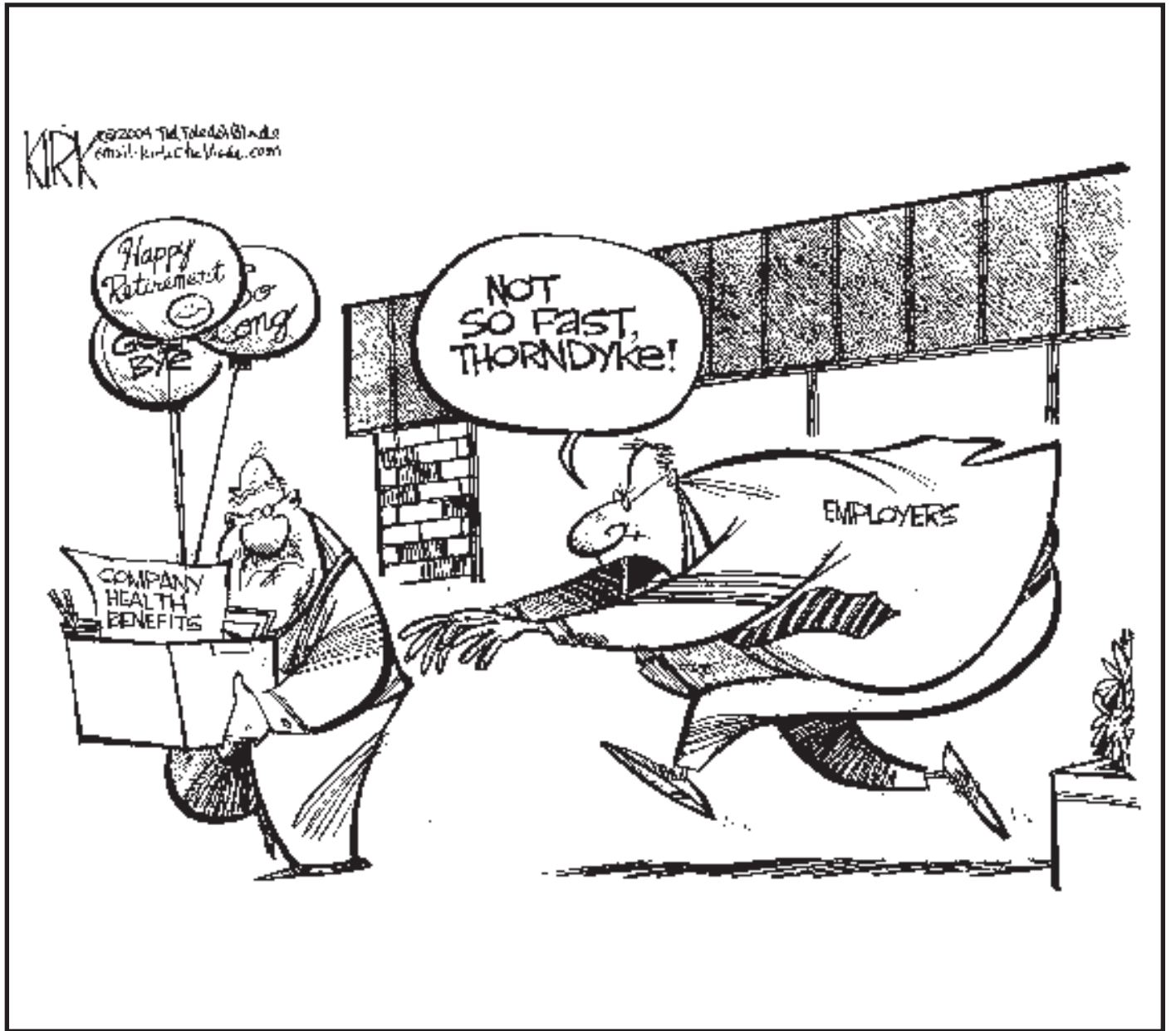
For years, the rising dropout rate has been obscured by statistical sleight of hand that keeps official tallies artificially low. New research reveals the scope of what Kerry rightly calls a national tragedy: Three of every 10 high school students drop out before graduation. Among blacks and Latinos, the figure is 50%. The most vulnerable are poor kids attending large big-city schools, where they see no connection between the lessons taught in class and the opportunities—or lack thereof—in society.

The focus on tougher academic standards has shrunk alternatives as cash-strapped districts do away with “nonessential” classes—from art to auto shop—that kept unconventional students engaged. Faced early on with standardized tests, marginal students grow accustomed to failure. The ranks of middle school dropouts are expanding; the number of high-schoolers who quit and test for a general equivalency diploma has doubled in the last 10 years, and independent studies programs aimed at discouraged students are bursting at the seams.

The societal costs of dropping out are well documented—increased criminality, higher welfare rolls, a bigger burden on tax-funded social services. Efforts to combat the problem have been desperately creative but woefully inadequate. Chicago school officials now require prospective dropouts to sign a statement acknowledging future consequences, such as “I will not be able to afford many things that I will see others acquiring.” Some states are considering denying driver's licenses to teenage dropouts. But broad-based intervention has had mixed results. A study of federal dropout prevention programs detected little effect and concluded that school-based personal attention from adults may be the best antidote.

Kids need someone to help link their talents to the possibilities that education provides. A renaissance of vocational ed should represent not a step back but a step toward a respectable future. Good vocational programs that combine training in marketable skills with challenging academic courses can reduce the dropout rate among high-risk kids and inspire many to go on to college. It's an alternative that campaigning politicians would be wise to consider. After all, a plumber is more likely to vote than a prisoner.

(c) 2004, Los Angeles Times



US needs to stay the course in Iraq

By **MICHAEL RUBIN**
Special to The Baltimore Sun

Now is not the time for the United States to withdraw from Iraq.

Stung by the damage done by revelations that American personnel abused detainees in Iraq and Afghanistan, President Bush spoke on Arab television and was unequivocal: “People in Iraq must understand that I view those practices as abhorrent.” He pledged to punish the soldiers involved.

Across the Middle East, officials condemned the United States. Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi, for example, said the incident was proof that the United States had a “systematic plan to torture Iraqis, to kill them, to rape them.” Syria’s official daily, Ath-Thawra, called the abuse “proof” that torture is widespread in Iraq. Hundreds of Iraqis protested in front of Abu Ghraib prison, demanding the release of all prisoners. In Iran, Syria and Egypt, newspapers called for American withdrawal from Iraq.

But there could be nothing worse than a U.S. pullout.

Professors and pundits may say that the sky has fallen, but Iraqis have a broader perspective. They may forgive the actions of a few soldiers. While the American media focus on car bombs and prison abuse, in the year since liberation, Iraqis have also watched thousands of soldiers and contractors repair schools, repave roads and revitalize the electrical grid.

There’s no doubt that the prison photos are devastating. But they are not a death blow to Bush’s call for a fundamental transformation of the Middle East. Iraqis respect Bush for his willingness to address them. The president has juxtaposed himself with every ruler in the Arab world.

Iraqis often acknowledge that from Jordan to Morocco, kings and presidents remained silent in the face of Saddam Hussein’s crimes. Even U.N. special envoy Lakhdar Brahimi, while undersecretary-general of the Arab League, said nothing as Saddam slaughtered Kurds and Arab.

Iraqis ask where Arab leaders were when Saddam’s Baath Party raped women, maimed men and filled mass graves. “Officials of the former regime did not even try to apologize. Bush’s attempt to repair the damage is a good thing,” a Baghdad teacher told the Associated Press on Wednesday.

Democracies acknowledge mistakes and correct them. Dictator-

ships cover them up. The way forward lies in American transparency.

As the United States brings the perpetrators to justice, Bush should challenge regional regimes to do the same. For example, he should demand that Sudanese President Omar Hassan Ahmed el-Bashir bring to justice those soldiers who, according to Human Rights Watch, in recent weeks have massacred blacks and committed mass rape and ethnic cleansing in Sudan’s Darfur province.

Even as Arabic channels condemn the United States, Bush should demand they investigate the plight of Fathi Eljahmi, a Libyan democracy advocate. Two days after U.S. Assistant Secretary of State William J. Burns visited Libyan strongman Moammar Gadhafi, Libyan security arrested Eljahmi. The White House and the Arabic media remain silent despite reports that Libyan security forces have tortured the dissident.

Bush should also demand that the Arab media investigate the plight of Aktham Naisse. Syrian police detained Naisse on April 14 for circulating a petition calling for democracy. In his court appearance eight days later, witnesses said Naisse’s hand and leg were broken. Nor has the Arab League demanded an investigation into the Syrian regime’s detention and torture of dozens of Syrian Kurds, arrested after the last pro-democracy demonstrations in March.

Iran should back its rhetoric with substance. Bush should hold Iran accountable for its treatment of 75-year-old journalist Siamak Pourzand. Imprisoned for more than a year after demanding democracy, Pourzand was tortured by Iranian police and forced to confess to imaginary crimes on state television. Denied medical care, his weight dropped to 121 pounds. Last month, he suffered a heart attack. He is fortunate, though.

Iranian security arrested photojournalist Zahra Kazemi on June 23. Beaten in custody, she fell into a coma and died. The Iranian government refused to make her body available for autopsy. No one has been prosecuted for her murder.

A small number of soldiers and contractors have soiled the reputation of thousands of American servicemen and women. The Coalition Provisional Authority has freed 24 million Iraqis from a terrible dictatorship; despite our mistakes, Iraqis will not forget that.

We should not abandon Iraq because of the actions of a few individuals. Nor should we abandon the oppressed throughout the Middle East. It is that that would be most unforgivable.

Rubin is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute.

It's just grammar. Whom really cares?

By DENNIS BARON

Special to the Los Angeles Times

Americans are convinced that there's a right and a wrong way to write something. We gleefully point out other people's language mistakes, although many of us secretly worry that we use "who" when we should be using "whom," or put the comma in the wrong place, or confuse "which" and "that." So we buy books to find the answer.

Self-help language books sport attention-grabbing titles and forced humor. They seldom fulfill their promises. "Painless Grammar," according to its blurb, will make you laugh (hah!). "The Well-Tempered Sentence" seeks to rescue punctuation from the perils of boredom (yawn). "The Transitive Vampire" aims to keep readers awake with gothic sentences. (A wooden stake and some caffeine would work better.) "Woe Is I" is "the grammarphobe's guide to better English in plain English." (Since when is "Woe is I" idiomatic? Since when is "grammarphobe" plain English?) "When Bad Grammar Happens to Good People" plays on the common fear that "how you speak or write is holding you back at work." (Donald Trump never fired anyone for a solecism.) And "The Complete Idiot's Guide to Grammar and Style" speaks for itself.

New to this corpus is Lynne Truss' "Eats, Shoots and Leaves," a British best seller about where to put the commas that was just released in the United States and now holds the No. 2 spot on the New York Times nonfiction list, just behind Richard Clarke's book about our counterterrorism failures. That should be a measure of how seriously Americans seek out language advice.

"Eats, Shoots and Leaves" takes its title from a joke. A panda walks into a bar, has a snack and shoots the place up. When challenged, the panda points to the definition of "panda" in a poorly punctuated natural history book: "Large black-and-white mammal, native to China. Eats, shoots and leaves."

Get it? A bit of British humor. Or humour, for unlike the Harry Potter books, Truss' treatise preserves its Britishisms.

There's not much chance that a book whose title hinges on a bad joke poses a threat to such classics as Strunk and White's "Elements of Style," Henry Fowler's "Dictionary of Modern English Usage" and George Orwell's "Politics and the English Language." But it shares the faults of the genre: Relying on such books for advice on writing is like relying on the almanac for a weather forecast. The information provided might not fit your individual needs or circumstances.

Another problem of self-help language books is their tendency to slip up. Fowler made up rules when it suited him. Strunk and White violated their rules when it suited them. Orwell stole his rules of good English from Fowler and passed them off as his own. Nobody's perfect.

I agree with Truss that amateur and professional writers often mis-punctuate, but she fails to prove that bad punctuation causes misunderstanding. Take the panda joke. Many written versions of it don't even have commas. The definition simply reads "Eats shoots and leaves." The ambiguity—the humor—is in the ear of the beholder, even on the printed page.

But people are buying the panda book, and some of them might even read it. That's where the problem lies. Usage guides should come with the warning, "Don't try this at home." These books mislead us into thinking that correctness guarantees effectiveness. A purist in my neighborhood once climbed onto the checkout counter at the grocery store and with a marker changed the express lane's "12 items or less" to "12 items or fewer."

Correct, perhaps, but ineffective, because it isn't idiomatic. Sometimes less is more. Churchill got it right: There is some English up with which we should not put.

There's no silver bullet that will turn bad writing into good, no just-add-water formula for producing wonderful prose. Books like "Eats, Shoots and Leaves" make us more aware of our language use but, paradoxically, this self-consciousness might backfire. In our attempts to be correct, to follow directions that might not fit the context, we will make more mistakes, not—ahem—fewer.

American English remains vibrant and effective precisely because we're skeptical of authorities. When corrected, we plead the First Amendment: "It's a free country, and no one tells me what to say!"

Baron is the author of seven books on the English language. He teaches English and linguistics at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

Prisoner degradation abroad—and at home

By JAMES Q. WHITMAN

Special to The Washington Post

It has emerged that two of the MPs implicated in the Abu Ghraib prison scandal have worked as corrections officers in the United States. One hopes and prays that nothing like the horrors of Abu Ghraib happened on their watches at home. Nevertheless, the very fact that American prison guards were involved in such barbarism abroad raises a question that ought to disturb all of us: Is what happened in Iraq in any way typical of what happens in domestic American punishment?

This is not a question many of us want to face at the moment: Our sense of shame and horror is quite overwhelming enough when we focus only on Iraq. But the sad truth is that we have every reason to take the question seriously. When it comes to degradation in punishment, it's not just a question of Iraq. It's about degradation at home as well. We will not be able to digest the lessons of Abu Ghraib unless we understand as much.

Over the past few years, I have been studying the forms of criminal punishment in America and abroad, and I have learned that the American attitude toward degradation in punishment has become dramatically different from that in other countries. Americans simply do not understand how shocking our forms of punishment can seem to foreign observers.

Take Germany and France. Degradation is regarded as so unacceptable in those countries that they have generally banned the use of prison uniforms—a far cry from stripping prisoners naked to humiliate them. And that is only the beginning. Prisoners are supposed to be treated like ordinary human beings in continental Europe, entitled to ordinary respect. Thus inmates have privacy rights in Europe—which means, for example, that they are not housed behind barred doors. Certainly continental inmates are not obliged to use toilets in the open view of guards of the op-

posite sex, as they may be in America. In a country such as Germany, ordinary labor law applies to prison inmates, giving them the same kinds of protections accorded workers in the outside world. There are even rules requiring that prisoners be addressed respectfully, as Herr So-and-So.

Imagine how America looks to punishment professionals from such countries. It's not just about the photos of grinning MPs engaged in gleeful forms of humiliation in Iraq. It's not just about our previous international scandal of this kind—the one surrounding photos of prisoners taken in Afghanistan, chained and blindfolded on an airplane floor as they were carted to Guantanamo Bay. It's not just about ostentatiously degrading practices such as the chain gang. It's about everyday American criminal punishment, in ordinary American prisons.

What has happened in our country? There was a time when America was regarded as a model of civilized punishment. A century and a half ago, de Tocqueville was convinced that America would always be a model of mildness. In 1945 Americans could still look upon Germany and feel pride that we had not succumbed to the German sort of barbarism. Today things are very different. We incarcerate at a rate staggeringly higher than other Western countries. We criminalize a far wider range of conduct. We are a country known worldwide for our exceptionally punitive practices—not least when it comes to degradation.

Terrible evil has come out of the Abu Ghraib scandal for America. It's hard to imagine how the damage to our international standing can be repaired. But some good can come from it if it brings us to recognize the barbarity of any punishment system, abroad or at home, that does not recoil from practices of degradation.

The writer is professor of comparative law at Yale Law School and the author of "Harsh Justice: Criminal Punishment and the Widening Divide between America and Europe."

For Hollywood, news biz is show biz

By DAVID SHAW

Los Angeles Times

Two stories that flashed across my journalistic radar screen on the same day recently seemed at first glance so obviously and mutually contradictory that I found myself doing one of those head-shaking double takes.

The first was yet another account of ever-growing public cynicism and hostility toward the news media. Nothing surprising there. Even before the last few years' Hall of Shame plagiarism and fabrication performances by Jayson Blair of the New York Times, Jack Kelley of USA Today and Stephen Glass of the New Republic, the media's reputation had been sinking faster than Hillary Clinton at a Rush Limbaugh pool party.

But the second story, which—like the first—originated in the Boston Globe, reported that Hollywood is increasingly turning to the news business "in search of laughs, drama or just a story to tell."

Hollywood has converted the repugnant Glass saga to celluloid—last year's "Shattered Glass"—and now there are several other pending or potential movie and television projects that revolve around the news media: "Anchorman," a romantic comedy about a television newsman with "raging hormones, perfect hair and an inflated ego." "Country of My Skull," an interracial drama about reporters covering the Truth and Reconciliation Hearings in South Africa. A half-hour HBO comedy about a cable news network. A prime-time network sitcom about a television sports reporter. Another about a singer-turned-reporter on a newsmagazine show that will remind some viewers of a bad episode of "20/20." A third based on the experiences of a Time magazine reporter. A fourth about a newspaper columnist.

Isn't it incongruous to expect audiences to watch movies and television shows about people and a profession they claim to increasingly dislike and mistrust? What's going on here? Lights, camera, retraction?

No, says Robert Thompson, director of the Center for Popular Television at Syracuse University. The decline in public respect for the media might make journalists better subjects than ever for Hollywood.

"Instead of showing the news media as heroic people fighting the good fight, this gives the entertainment media the opportunity to expose their underbellies," he says. "Journalists are now beating

out lawyers as the most despised profession out there, but as that happens, their potential to be the subject of great narratives and ... comedy in particular becomes greater. Comedy writers and actors are always happy to dethrone anyone with pretensions toward power and greatness."

But even when the public "isn't much interested in the practice of journalism, it's intrigued by the character of the journalist," says Richard Ness, author of "From Headline Hunter to Superman: A Journalism Filmography."

"The reporter always seems to be on the front line of things happening right now, and audiences find that appealing."

The journalist also is "a convenient character," Ness says, "a type the audience easily recognizes, sort of like the cowboy. Screenwriters don't have to spend a lot of time explaining who he is."

This is especially true today, when journalists—through their books, speeches, television appearances and, yes, their scandals—have become increasingly visible public figures.

The very scandals that have blackened the media's reputation simultaneously might have whetted the public's appetite for more.

"Watching C-SPAN and press conferences and the 24-hour news cycle and seeing all these 'inside baseball' stories and scandals on cable and in media columns gives people a feeling for the rhythms of the profession," says Siva Vaidhyanathan, director of communications at New York University.

"That sense of familiarity might combine with the love/hate relationship people have with the media to create an emotional tension between the audience and the on-screen journalistic characters."

Maybe that's inevitable these days. Still, I don't think it bodes well for the media or—in the long run—for society that network executives think people want to laugh at journalists (especially if the network executives are right).

Many of us in the media probably do take ourselves too seriously. We deserve to be made fun of from time to time. But I'd hate for us to become stock sitcom characters.

Just think, though: If "Cheers," another of those ensemble-cast-in-a-familiar-setting sitcoms, had been set in a reporters' bar, of which there is at least one in every big city, it could have been called "Jeers."

Shaw is a reporter for The Times.

Saipan Tribune
CNMFS FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740. **ADVERTISING** For inquiries contact 235-2769. E-mail: sales.tribune@vzpacifica.net

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235-3740. E-mail: editor.tribune@vzpacifica.net. Website: www.saipantribune.com **CUSTOMER SERVICE** For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740. **SUBSCRIPTION** Published Monday to Sunday, Saipan Tribune offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of \$182. Off-island subscription rate is \$376 per year. For additional subscription information, call

Residential, biz inspections in Kagman

The Division of Environmental Quality and the Bureau of Environmental Health is conducting On-site Disposal System and premise compliance inspections on residential and business facilities in Kagman.

The inspections is ongoing since April 21 and will continue

to be conducted every Tuesday and Wednesday.

These inspections are mandated by Public Law 12-48, which states that inspection must be conducted on commercial and private premises to prevent and control vector-borne diseases. Furthermore, the Governor's

Directive, No. 220 discusses the identification and elimination of non-point source pollution, such as leakage from sewer systems and effluent disposals.

Kagman residents are asked to cooperate with inspectors by keeping their dog(s) on a leash for the safety of the inspectors.

Both BEH and DEQ inspectors are required to wear their respective uniforms and photo identification during all inspections.

For additional information on the OSDS inspections, contact the BEH office at 664-4870/2 or the DEQ office at 664-8500/1.

CRIMES

From Page 1

"They should not fall prey to any type of activities that make them victims," he said. "There's hope in the system."

The rise of crimes against the elderly in 2003 came after a decrease of about 11 percent in 2002 compared with that of 2001, which featured 373 elderly victims.

Statistics showed that, of the cases this year, majority of the victims (40) were of Chamorro ethnicity. There were 20 Caucasian victims, 19 Filipinos, and 10 Koreans. Others include Carolinian (8), Japanese (7), Chinese (2), Palauan (2), and one apiece for Samoan, Chuukese, Kosraen, and Yapese. One case

was also classified as others.

In 2003, 139 victims were of Chamorro ethnicity, with 101 being males. Ranking second were Filipinos with 77, of which 62 were males, while Koreans ranked third with 50, 38 of which were males. Fourth on the list were Caucasians with 43 cases, of which 41 were males. Other ethnicities include Palauans (20), Carolinians (17), Japanese (16), Chinese (9), Chuukese (7), Pohnpeians (3), Hawaiians (3), and Yapese (1). Six of the cases featured unknown ethnic backgrounds, one was classified as other, and one was not classified.

Victims who were of Chamorro ethnicity also ranked the highest in 2002, with 117, of which 71 were males. The next

highest were Filipinos with 53, of which 43 were males; and Caucasians with 44 victims, of which 39 were males. Other victim numbers include 37 Koreans, 26 Carolinians, 16 Japanese, 13 Chinese, 11 Palauans, seven Chuukese, four Yapese, one Hawaiian, one classified as other, and one unknown.

Victims who were of Chamorro ethnicity also ranked highest in 2001 at 126, double that of the next (Filipinos) which posted 62 victims. Others include Caucasian (43), Japanese (35), Korean (32), Carolinian (31), Palauan (12), Chuukese and Chinese (8), Hawaiian (3), African American (2), Samoan, Hispanic, Yapese, Pohnpeian, and Bangladeshi (one each). There were 12 not classified, two unknown, and

one classified as other.

The year 2000 also featured 134 cases in which the victims were Chamorros, 69 were Filipinos, 35 were Japanese, and 30 were Koreans. Others included Caucasians (30), Carolinians (22), Palauans (15), Chinese (9), Chuukese (8), Kosraeans and Pohnpeians (2), and one apiece for Hawaiian and Thai. There were also seven unclassified cases, one classified as other, and one unknown.

Also, 74 percent, or 84 victims, this year were males. The number of male victims in 2003 was 292, or 74.3 percent of the total number; in 2002 a total of 231, or 69.6 percent of the total, were male victims. There were 245 males victimized in 2001 and 269 in 2002.

APRIL

From Page 1

a recovering tourism industry, which was plagued by global events that impacted worldwide travel last year.

"We'd like to see the numbers

even better than that," Sablan said.

Occupancy rate in March reached 69.96 percent, improving on last year's 63.69 percent. The average room rate in March slightly dropped to \$79.33 compared with March 2003's \$82.43.

The hotel sector first showed signs of recovery this year when room occupancy soared to 82.03 percent in February, even when the average room rate was \$80.67.

The figure surpassed the already high occupancy of 79.28

percent in February 2003, when the CNMI benefited from visitors who diverted from Guam due to severe destruction caused by supertyphoon Pongsona on the federal territory in Dec. 2002. The average room rate in February 2003 reached \$87.76.

NMI

From Page 1

Also, Callaghan said the offices would carry out various tie-up programs, monitor tours, conduct campaigns, develop a website, and create brochures that would focus on specific targets.

"These offices will provide the Marianas Visitors Authority

with strategic marketing plans for the destination in all areas applicable. They would work with airlines and networks to increase awareness and visibility of the destination," he said.

In a report submitted by the MVA, the agency urged the CNMI to prepare as efforts are in the works for making the CNMI part of the Approved Destination

List. To further this effort, the MVA proposed to have both marketing activities before and after the ADS approval.

The release of the \$300,000 is part of the additional \$500,000 investment made by the CNMI government to advance tourism and marketing efforts.

According to the governor, this is on top of the \$2.6 million

the CNMI expended for promotional activities to rebuild the CNMI's tourism sector.

The CNMI government has also partnered with the Strategic and Economic Development Council and the MVA in leveraging \$500,000 in contributions from its business members into \$16 million worth of promotions.

GROTTO

From Page 1

walk cantilevered out over the opening of the Grotto.

The makeover would also include the construction of a cantina with cradles for the dive tanks and a floor space for tables and chairs to be used by tourists. There would also be picnic shelters with concrete table and benches with shelter, guttered and connected to a 500-gallon water catchment.

Also, the project would see the construction of restrooms,

with an elevated 1,500-gallon water tank, as well as a sunken 1,000-gallon septic tank with a leach field.

Callaghan said six barbeque pits would also be installed; the tangan tangan overgrowth to the cliff will be cleared to provide a panoramic view of the ocean; and a terraced viewing area would be installed.

The proposal also asks for the installation of paving blocks, crushed rock or compacted gravel bed for roadway into the park and parking area, a landscaping plan using native trees

and shrubs, and the construction of three additional picnic tables with barbeque pits.

The Department of Lands and Natural Resources is asking prospective project managers to work closely with the DLNR and to provide a safety plan for personnel working on the project. The agency also asked applicants to secure require permits prior to any earthmoving or construction activities.

In his State of the CNMI address, Gov. Juan N.

Babauta said the CNMI has been creating a demand that has resulted in the increased number of tourists.

"We are going to keep making the Marianas a better destination and opening our door to new markets," said the governor.

To ensure the continued influx of tourists, the Office of the Governor is collaborating with the Marianas Visitors Authority and the Strategic Economic Development Council in promoting the CNMI to other countries.

PARTIAL

From Page 1

system in the Philippines, which afforded Filipinos outside the country the chance to vote.

Although the polling place closed its doors to voters at 5pm Monday, election personnel managed to start the count-

ing of votes only at about 10:30pm. "Because this is the first time, it took long preparations," said Sese.

During preparations before the counting began, electrical power tripped off at the polling center. Some Filipinos who witnessed this jokingly welcomed this development, a scenario associated with

electoral fraud that plagued Philippine elections in the past. There were cases of ballot snatching and switching in the Philippines in previous elections.

Namfrel said the Saipan polls were generally clean and credible, with leaders of various Filipino organizations in the CNMI participating in the

vote counting process as volunteers. Sese said, however, that he detailed a Namfrel volunteer in the polling center's power switches.

Philippine consul general Wilfredo Maximo and consul Wenceslao Gayola supervised the electoral process as special board of election inspectors.



DES PTA meeting

Parents and guardians of Dandan Elementary School are being informed that the school will have its last PTA meeting for school year 2003-2004 on Tuesday, May 18, at 6:30pm in the school cafeteria.

Pageant postponed

The officers and organizers of the 2004 Queen of the World Gay Pageant sponsored by the Visayas-Mindanao Association (VIS-MINDA), which is scheduled on May 15, at Hotel Nikko Saipan would like to extend their sincerest apologies to the public as the said event is temporarily put on hold until further notice.

For those who have already purchased tickets, please hold on to that and do not worry because it would still be honored later on.

For more information, call Visminda president Nel Atalig 322-0691 or Ted Antiquena at 288-2677.

Public library celebrates Family Literacy Month

In celebration of Family Literacy Month, the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library is informing the public that the Children's Librarian will be having an evening story hour on Thursdays for the month of May. The story hour will be held on May 13 and 20, from 6pm-7pm.

KagES Cultural Day set

The Kagman Elementary School will be holding its 3rd Annual Cultural Day on May 15 from 8am to 3pm.

The annual KagES Cultural Day celebrates the different cultures represented by the school community through song, dance, food and game booths, and various performances. It is hoped that, through this, its students will become socially responsible individuals who respect, and demonstrate knowledge of diverse cultures that fosters appreciation, tolerance and understanding of individual differences.

The public is welcome to participate.

Memorial Day meetings set

On May 31, 2004, Memorial Day, the CNMI will be paying tribute to fallen members of the U.S. Armed Forces.

The Office of the Military/Veterans Affairs would like to remind all concerned and interested that the Memorial Day Committee meetings will be held at its office on Capital Hill, Building #1364, every Wednesday at 10am. All are welcome.

WSR registration schedule

William S. Reyes Elementary School is announcing its registration schedule for school year 2004-2005. Registration procedures will be slightly different this school year.

Registration for incoming students will begun Friday, June 14, and continue through Tuesday, June 25.

If you need more information, call 664-3971/72.

OES Cultural Day on May 15

The Oleai Elementary School Cultural Day has been moved to Saturday, May 15, at the OES campus from 9am to 2pm. Tickets sold for April 24 will still be honored.

Proceeds of this activity will be used to support the school's ongoing improvement projects.

Oleai Elementary School staff, faculty and PTSA Officers would like to thank the following donors for their generosity: Pioneer, Lucky R Restaurant, Saipan Shipping Co., Saipan Stevedore Co., Duty Free, Tom's Water, John Ichihara, Roselle Ichihara, Microl Corp., Tina Tenorio, Tracy Del Rosario, Chino's Sterling Corp., Yodan Ent., McDonald's, Arnold Serman, Jesus Wabol, Marian Tudela, Megabyte, Hyatt Regency Hotel, Ming Ming Store, Cosmos Distributors, Frankie's Auto Shop, American Pacific Insurance Agency, and Mr. and Mrs. Rick Cabrera.

Outtrigger racing series ongoing

The Marianas Interscholastic Sports Association Outtrigger Racing Series will continue every Saturday until May 29. The event is open to the public and will be a great opportunity for everyone to share in the culture and competition.

Manta Ray battalion hosts military ball

The CNMI JROTC, which consists of Rota, Tinian, Saipan Southern, Kagman, and Marianas high schools, held their first multiple school unit military ball under the single headquarters concept for all five schools. This year, the Manta Ray Battalion of the Saipan Southern High School volunteered to host the ball.

About 255 persons attended the ball, including distinguished guests such as Roman Benavente, the Public School System’s Board of Education chair, who was also the guest speaker; Dr. David Borja, PSS Associate Commissioner for Administrative Services; and his wife, Karen, vice principal for Marianas High School; Marja Lee Taitano, secretary and member of the BOE; Department of Public Safety commissioner and Army Reserve Maj. Edward Camacho; Dr. James Denight, MHS principal; Doreen Tudela, Kagman High School principal; SGM Jesse Leon Guerrero, former MHS Army instructor and now Army instructor for Guam Simon Sanchez High School JROTC; SGM Frank Cepeda, and SGM Jess Muna. Army recruiter Sgt. Benavente and Marine recruiter Staff Sgt. John Slick were part of the participants.

Representatives from other JROTC programs on Rota and Tinian who participated were the outgoing and incoming battalion commanders for the Stallion and the Rota Buck.

In a statement, it said that, although the evening was quite warm, the ball participants seemed not too affected and everyone appeared to have had a great time.

“The Color Guard and the evening’s entertainers performed outstandingly. The emcees, cadet Capt. Shirley Collier and cadet Staff Sgt. Roque Indalecio did a fantastic job in their duties for the evening. With the experience and expertise of

SGM Joaquin Kiyoshi, Senior Army instructor of the Manta Ray and SFC Richard Haugh, Army instructor, the difficult

task of conducting the military ball by the hardworking and dedicated Manta Ray cadets was simplified, resulting in a

highly successful ceremony,” the statement said.

“Adding to the success of the military ball was the excite-

ment of looking for the winning hidden signs to win the various gifts donated by the Department of Public Safety. Thanks to Major Ed Camacho and the entire DPS folks. Thanks also goes out to Jessica and Jesselyn Kingto who

donated a cellular phone for the evening’s raffle,” it added. Jessica and Jesselyn Kingto are the daughters of Terry Kingto. Both are former cadets of Marianas High School and are currently on active duty with the U.S. Army.

SGMA donates to SVES scouts

The Saipan Garment Manufacturer’s Association recently made a \$500 donation to the San Vicente Elementary School’s Pack 911 Cub Scouts to help fund the group’s activities.

The Pack 911 Cub Scouts is chaired by Carmen Agulto, who, in a letter to SGMA, expressed gratitude for the “generous donation.”

“We salute you for your support. Un dangkulo na si yu’us ma’ase,” said Agulto.

The Pack 911 Cub Scouts have 20 members. They are Joseph Patris, Zarchy Sablan, Daniel Taitano, Dean DL. Guerrero, Max Castro, Tristin Muna, Aikman Wasisang, Artiel Castillo, Jessie Villazon and Edu Mari Banaag.

Joshua Villagomez, Anthony Cabrera, David Indalecio, Herman Villagomez, Adam Sablan, Johnri Banaag, Edward Ogo, Dakota Humphries, Francis DL. Guerrero and Juan Inos III.

microl
+red

Hunt on for old Japanese statues

Volunteers from the Pacific Society of Japan will be on the island of Saipan on June 11 and 12 to look for the remaining statues of the Bodhisattva Jizoo.

The stones statues were about 20 inches in height and were placed along the old road up on Mt. Tapotchau from Gualo Rai. These 88 stones statues were built in Uwajima on the island of Shikoku and brought to Saipan to be placed at each corner of the road to Mt. Tapochau.

This project was completed on March 21, 1935. At the top of the mountain, a statue of the famous historical Buddhist priest, Kooboo Daishi, was placed.

At that time there were about 100-130 Japanese citizens from Uwajima living in Garapan. They collected donations and carried the statues up the old road to be placed at each corner.

These statues were placed to protect travelers and young children. The 88 statues also represented the Japanese 88 temple pilgrimage on Shikoku Island. This hike was usually held on the days of the equinox and was very popular with school children as well as the local community.

At that time, the so-called road could only be traversed by bicycles and walkers. School children would take field trips all day to the top of Mt. Tapochau. From the top they could look down and see the white blossoms of coffee trees while eating their lunch.

Each statue had a number. Today we can only find number 56, 58, 62, 71, 82, and 85. Three of these can still be seen near Mt. Carmel Church. One is located among the monuments at Marpi. Ben Borja and Gregorio Cabrera each have in their possession a Jizoo statue.

The Pacific Society of Japan would like to invite volunteers to help locate more of these statues. If you would like to help or have knowledge of these statues of the Bodhisattva Jizoo, please contact Sachiko Adachi at 235-2459 or e-mail at sachiko@itecnmi.com.

Volunteers will walk down from Mt. Tapochau along the old road and trail to try and locate any remaining statues. Any elders who can help locate statues or help find the old road can contact Adachi.



DONATION FOR YAP

Marian Aldan-Pierce displays a check for \$2,500 that DFS Saipan is donating for the disaster victims in Yap. In the truck are boxes of supplies donated by local DFS employees like Donna Williams, third left, and Bernard Nunies, fourth left, that include clothes, bedding and other items needed by the displaced residents of Yap. Looking on are Cathy Cepeda and Lt. Gov. Diego Benevente who spearheaded the relief efforts for Yap.

DCCA workshops teach financial management, energy-saving tips

The Department of Community and Cultural Affairs has begun free financial management and energy conservation workshops for clients of its Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

The workshops, sponsored by LIHEAP and the DCCA Residential Energy Assistance Challenge Program, are aimed at helping low-income clients meet their utility needs through education on household financial management and energy conservation methods in the home.

“This is a great opportunity for families to learn how to take control of their money,” said REACH project coordinator Linda Concepcion-Torres. “We’ll be showing clients how to create a budget for their family, manage their credit, and save. We’ll also be teaching clients how to audit their electric usage at home and show them ways to reduce their energy consumption.”

Weekly workshops are scheduled to be held at 6-8pm in various villages. The next workshop will be held at the DCCA Office on Aging today, May 5. Space is limited and participants must register in advance by calling the DCCA LIHEAP or REACH Offices at 670-664-2568/9.

“Making a two-hour investment in this workshop will make a difference for families who apply what they learn,” said Concepcion-Torres. “Those who are willing to take this class also become eligible to win one of four gas stoves provided as incentives under our federal REACH grant.”

Energy conservation activities for children will also be provided. Advanced registration is also required for children. Interested individuals who are not LIHEAP clients may also participate on a space-available basis.

Business

NMI car sales post 20 percent growth

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

Automobile sales in the CNMI have been increasing this year, a development that the Commonwealth Auto Dealers Association sees as a sign of rising consumer confidence in an economy that is on the road to recovery.

Car sales during the first four months of the year reached 479, posting a 20.65-percent growth compared with the same period in 2003, which had sold 397 units.

Year-to-date sales figures showed that Toyota topped the car sales list, enjoying some 54.07-percent of the market pie. The total number of Toyota units that were sold this year reached 259. Toyota enjoyed the same standing as top seller last month, getting a market share of 46.90 percent in April for its 53-unit sales figure.

CADA president Joe Guerrero attributed the growth in the industry to rising confidence that the economy is improving, making people more optimistic

Azmar says it has proof of capability to mine Pagan

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

Azmar International said it can show proof of its financial capability to undertake large-scale pozzolan mining at Mt. Pagan.

Azmar president Ken Moore said yesterday that he has sent a letter to MPLA board chair Ana Demapan-Castro on the issue.

The letter, according to Azmar local spokesperson Don Farrell, explains that Azmar has already shown evidence of its financial soundness to MPLA representatives during a recent visit to Phoenix.

“But Azmar can always present again to the MPLA and prove that it has the money to handle this project,” said Farrell.

He said Azmar local representative Glen Palacios will be ready anytime to meet with MPLA and present “classified information” about Azmar’s finances.

“What we want now is a meeting with MPLA,” said Farrell.

The MPLA board earlier challenged Azmar to prove that it has the means to finance mining activities at Mt. Pagan.

“Where is the money? Show it to us. We can’t decide based on hearsay,” said Demapan-Castro during a recent board meeting held on Tinian.

The board had also cast doubt on Moore’s character following a negative testimony by Saipan Rep. Joseph Guerrero. Guerrero, a former Historical Preservation Office director, has told the board of a bad encounter with Moore.

He alleged that Moore is a smooth talker. “I want to warn the board to be very cautious. Be very careful with who you

are dealing with here. I urge you to deal with facts and be careful about empty promises,” Guerrero told the board.

Guerrero also partly attributed the improved car sales to the ongoing land compensation program by the Marianas Public Lands Authority, which helped improve a select consumer group’s buying power. More islanders have been replacing old vehicles since the beginning of the year.

“Each dealers have their good deals. It’s a good time to buy cars when consumers enjoy great savings,” added Guerrero.

He also noted the addition of 2005 models in the market, including Nissan’s Altima. He said Nissan’s 2005 Sentra model would soon arrive; Triple J Motors, meanwhile, disclosed the arrival of Mazda’s first sports utility vehicle on the island—the Tribute—very soon.

Auto dealers sold 113 cars last month, which translates to a 15.31 percent improvement compared with the 98 cars sold in April 2003.

The next top-selling brand is

Nissan, with local auto dealers selling 56 units from January to April. Nissan’s sales captured an 11.69-percent market share.

Mitsubishi and Mazda both got 9.81 percent of the market, with each brand selling 47 units each during the four-month period. Mazda managed to equal Mitsubishi’s sales when auto dealers sold 16

car units in April, tailing immediately behind Toyota and Nissan as top sellers of the month.

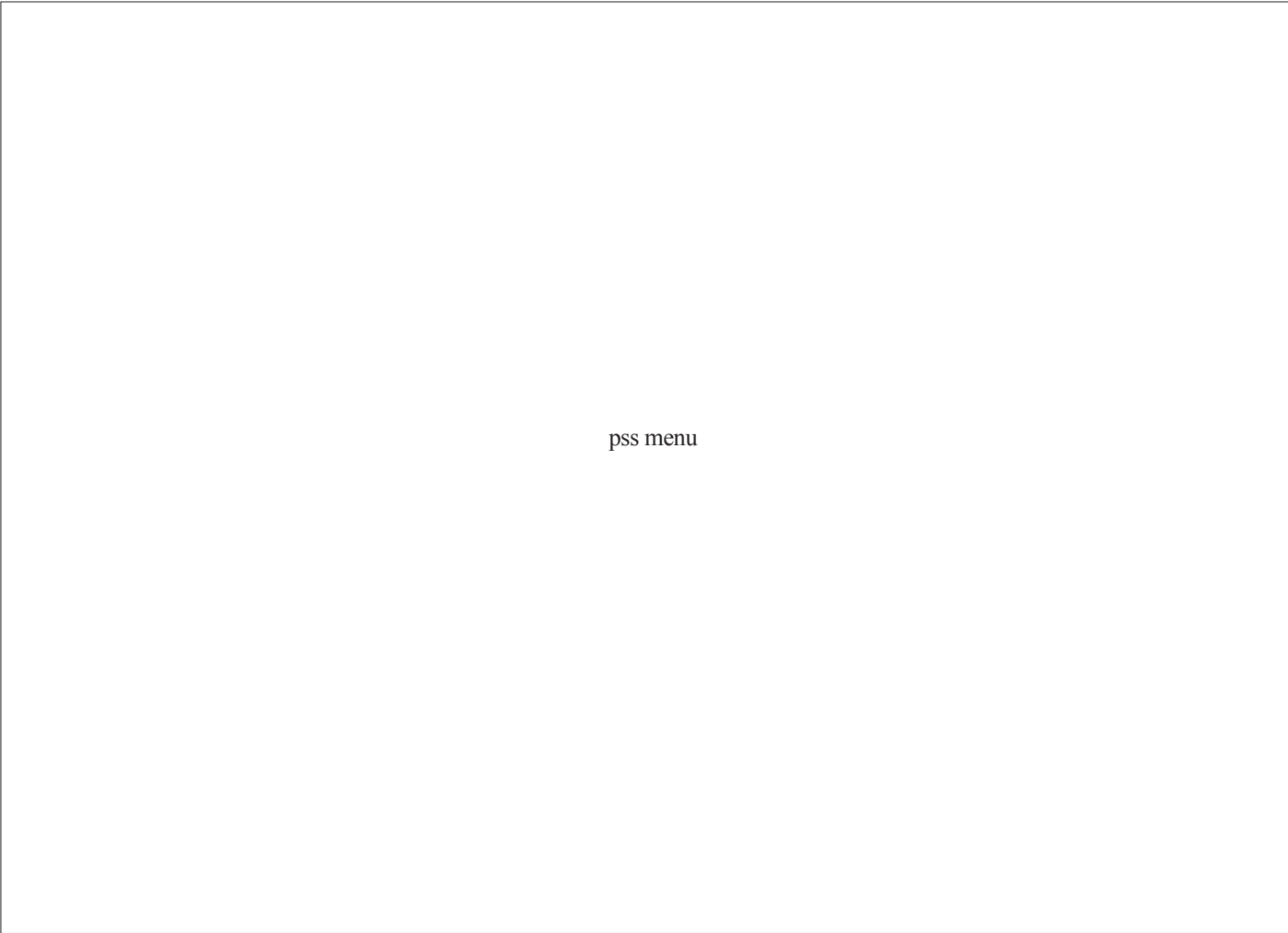
American automaker Ford sold 20 units this year to capture the fourth slot behind Mazda and Mitsubishi, getting 4.18-percent slice of market sales. Kia had 19 units sold for the period, getting 3.97-percent market share; Hyun-

dai sold 18 to get 3.76 percent of the market.

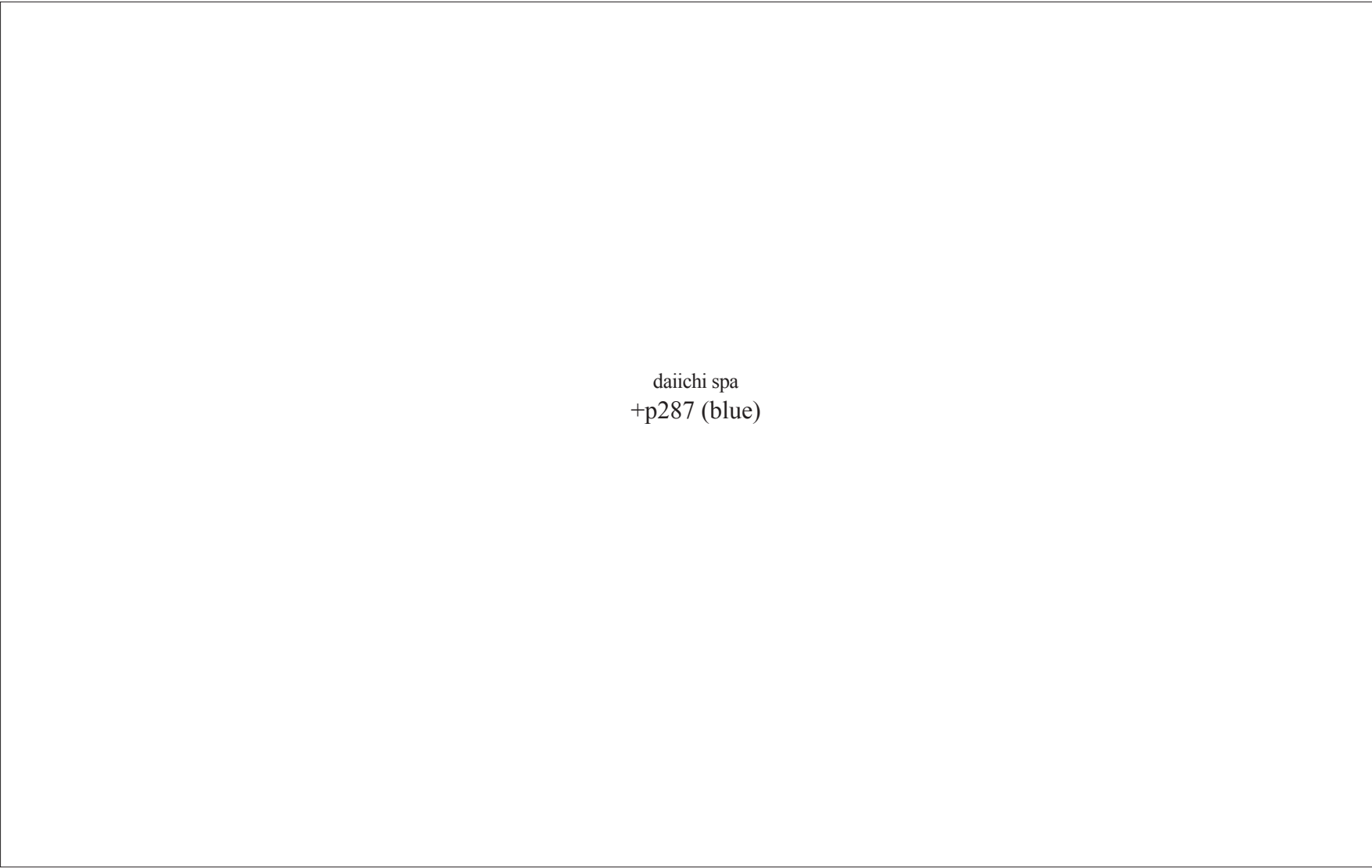
Microl Corp. topped the auto dealers’ list in car sales with 259 units, capturing 54.07 percent of the local market so far this year. Triple J Motors followed with 112 total sales so far, reflecting a market share of 23.38 percent. Joeten Motors sold 108 car units to

follow close behind, getting 22.55 percent of the local market.

Last month, Microl sold 53 Toyota units, making it the top seller for April. Joeten’s sales figure reached 33 last month due to Nissan’s competitive sales figure of 22. Triple J sold 27 units last month, 16 of which were of the Mazda brand.



pss menu



daiichi spa
+p287 (blue)

Oil price hits highest level since 1990

By **BRAD FOSS**
AP BUSINESS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—The price of oil rose to its highest level in more than 13 years on Monday as traders responded to the weekend killing of five Westerners working for an oil contractor in Saudi Arabia.

The wholesale price of gasoline also reached a new record, signaling the likelihood of even higher pump prices by Memorial Day, which marks the beginning of the summer driving season.

Crude for June delivery gained 83 cents on the New York Mercantile Exchange, set-

ting at \$38.21 per barrel—the highest price since Oct. 16, 1990, when oil was valued at \$38.89 per barrel.

The rally in oil prices was largely triggered by the violence in Saudi Arabia on Saturday, when four men opened fire on the offices of oil contractor ABB Lummus Global Inc. Two Americans, two Britons, an Australian and a Saudi died in the attack. All four attackers—who police said were Saudi brothers—were killed.

Analysts cited growing fears among traders that terrorists might escalate attacks against the oil industry in the

Middle East and potentially disrupt supplies.

“This is the second consecutive weekend that key Mideastern oil installations have come under assault,” Tom Kloza, director of Oil Price Information Service, said, referring to an attack a week earlier against Iraqi oil facilities.

On Monday, unleaded gasoline futures increased 2.7 cents to \$1.263 per gallon—the highest settlement on record since the contract started trading in December 1984.

“We’ve gotten ourselves into a big-time speculative market,” said Ed Silliere, an analyst at Energy Merchant LLC.

The run-up in oil prices makes it more expensive to produce gasoline, which already averages \$1.84 per gallon at the pump nationwide, according to the Energy Department.

Analysts say motor fuel supplies are tight because of strong demand, limited domestic refining capacity and government regulations requiring more than a dozen different blends of cleaner-burning gasoline for summer.

In other Nymex trading, the price of heating oil for June delivery rose 2.3 cents to 96.79 cents a gallon, while natural gas futures soared 35.8 cents to \$6.22 per 1,000 cubic feet.

Manufacturing activity slows down in April

NEW YORK (AP)—Escalating materials costs put a damper on manufacturing activity in April, according to an industry survey released Monday. But analysts say the economic outlook is still quite strong, noting that construction spending registered its best month on record in March.

The Institute for Supply Management said its manufacturing index slipped to 62.4 in April from 62.5 in March. The new reading was below the expectations of analysts, who had forecast a reading of 62.7.

The ISM said the economy is growing, but companies responding to its survey said that higher prices of certain commodities, such as aluminum and steel, were causing some difficulties. The ISM’s prices index came in at 88 percent, 2 percentage points higher than in March. It was the 26th consecutive month the index has increased - and the highest the index has been since April 1979, when it was 89.2 percent.

Still, analysts weren’t too worried, saying the risk of inflation remains slight. They focused more on the manufacturing index, which is still well above 50. Any index reading above 50 indicates expansion, while one below 50 indicates that manufacturing activity is contracting.

“The (manufacturing) index

is still at a very high level, and this was an insignificant change,” said Alexander Paris, economist and market analyst for Chicago-based Barrington Research who is hopeful materials costs have peaked for now.

“Anything over 60 indicates an extremely high level of activity, and this shows you manufacturing is still growing at a fairly fast rate,” he said, noting this is the sixth consecutive month the manufacturing index has come in above 60.

That optimism was bolstered by a separate Commerce Department report Monday that found construction activity jumped by 1.5 percent in March from February to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$944.1 billion, the highest level on record.

The performance was three times bigger than the 0.5 percent increase that some economists were calling for and the gains were fairly broad. The report also provided further evidence that the construction and housing market in the United States are in good shape. The value of residential projects being worked on by private builders clocked in at an annual rate of \$507.2 billion in March, also an all-time monthly high.

The 1.5 percent increase for March came after a modest 0.4 percent rise in February, according to revised figures.

Labor chief Chao touts new rules on overtimes

WASHINGTON (AP)—Labor Secretary Elaine Chao worked in public and private Monday to head off an embarrassing defeat in the Senate at the hands of Democrats challenging new Bush administration overtime regulations.

Speaking to nursing students in Florida, Chao said the regulation “makes clear that registered nurses who currently receive overtime will continue to receive overtime when the new rule takes effect.”

Her claim drew a prompt rebuttal from the leaders of several nurses’ unions. “For the first time in the history of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), hourly paid employees, including registered nurses, may be denied overtime compensation,” the Coalition to Preserve Overtime Rights for Registered Nurses wrote members of the Senate.

With a close vote expected Tuesday, Chao arranged a private meeting with Sen. Lincoln Chafee of Rhode Island, who

has yet to take a position on the regulations. Chafee was one of six Republicans who sided with Democrats last fall in a 54-46 vote to scuttle an earlier draft.

The rules have been revised extensively since then, in part to meet the election-year concerns of Republicans who feared the impact among voters, particularly in a time of economic uncertainty.

The AFL-CIO strongly opposes the regulation, arguing the change could cost millions of workers their overtime, and congressional Democrats have vowed to try and blunt its impact.

A proposal by Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, would block implementation of any portion of the regulation that strips workers of their current overtime eligibility.

The revised regulation includes declarations that police, firefighters and other “first responders” earning up to \$100,000 a year will be eligible for overtime.

Nation

California fires cover nearly 5,000 acres

By BEN FOX
AP WRITER

TEMECULA, Calif. (AP)—Southern California’s 2004 fire season opened Monday with firefighters battling blazes that

covered nearly 5,000 acres and forced hundreds of people to evacuate. The largest was a 2,500-acre fire in Riverside County. But five other blazes were scattered across Santa Barbara, Los An-

Senator: Intel panel report unflattering

MANHATTAN, Kan. (AP)—The Senate Intelligence Committee’s upcoming report on prewar assessments of Iraq “does not paint a flattering picture” of the nation’s intelligence community, Republican Sen. Pat Roberts said Monday. But Roberts, the committee’s chairman, said the intelligence failure wasn’t limited to the United States. Many nations - including France and Germany, which criticized the U.S. decision to act in Iraq without United Nations approval - believed Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction. “Almost everyone believed, regardless of how you felt about whether you should have unilateral military action or wait for the U.N., there was no disagreement about the belief that weapons of mass destruction existed,” Roberts, R-Kan., said during a lecture at Kansas State University. He added later, “The problem is, the information was wrong.” Roberts said the congressional report should be re-

leased in June, and it contains firm conclusions about the need for intelligence reform. “We do not have all of the answers yet about what went wrong before 9-11 and in the prewar Iraq work, but I believe we know enough to begin the process of seriously discussing intelligence reform,” Roberts said. Roberts said even if Iraq did not have a well-developed weapons program, the country’s instability and corruption would have made it a hub for chemical weapons dealing if the United States and others had not intervened. “The United States must be willing to use force, unilaterally if necessary, to protect our security and that of our allies,” Roberts said. “But, it is also time for some hardheaded assessment of American interests.” Roberts also cautioned against what he said were growing feelings that America is entitled and obligated to be the promoter of democracy around the world.



Firefighters with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection set backfires to rob a wildfire of fuel along highway 79, Monday, May 3, 2004, east of Temecula, Calif.

geles and San Diego counties, as temperatures climbed to 100 degrees in some places. Several firefighters among the thousands on the job were treated for injuries, including heat stroke, dehydration and

smoke inhalation. Authorities ordered a mandatory evacuation of several homes in the path of the Riverside County fire in the hills south of Temecula. They previously advised residents of about 100 homes to evacuate. The blaze destroyed a home and a research facility used by researchers at the University of California, Riverside. “They are just totally burned to the ground. All that’s left is a

couple of pieces of steel,” said Rick Cook, emergency services coordinator for Riverside County. Another Riverside County fire that broke out Monday afternoon in El Cerrito spread across 400 acres in less than three hours, said Department of Forestry spokeswoman Becky Luther. She said it threatened up to 30 homes. A fire in the Los Padres National Forest, in Santa Barbara County, grew to about 100 acres within two hours. Firefighters had about 75 percent containment on a 50-acre blaze that broke near a Los Angeles County jail in Castaic, said fire Capt. Mark Savage. Firefighters said they managed to slow a blaze that burned 1,500 acres near the Camp Pendleton Marine base in San Diego County. It was about 45 percent contained, with no structures damaged. A fire that started Sunday just east of Lake Elsinore in Riverside County had scorched 350 acres. One structure was burned. The start of the fire season was declared three weeks earlier than last year because of dry weather and a tree-killing bark beetle infestation.

Ohio priest indicted on murder charge

TOLEDO, Ohio (AP)—A Roman Catholic priest has been indicted on an aggravated murder charge in the slaying of a nun 24 years ago. A grand jury had met Friday to consider the charge against the Rev. Gerald Robinson, but its decision was not announced until Monday. Robinson was arrested April 23 in the strangling and stabbing of Sister Margaret Ann Pahl, 71, during Easter weekend in 1980. He was long a suspect in her death. The nun’s body was discovered in a chapel at Mercy Hospital, covered by an altar cloth. Investigators have described it as “ritualistic” slaying that has the Toledo Diocese looking into claims of satanic sex abuse by priests. Robinson was released from jail Monday after supporters put together enough property to post a \$400,000 property bond to cover his \$200,000 bail. He said nothing before getting into a sport utility vehicle that was waiting for him.

Robinson’s attorney, Alan Kopop, said his client will plead innocent. He cannot face the death penalty because it was not in effect at the time of the killing. Detectives have said the nun’s death involved some type of ceremony and that they believe Robinson acted alone. Robinson was arrested after investigators analyzed blood patterns and concluded that the murder weapon was in his “control.” They have not identified the weapon or who owned it. Investigators began to review the slaying after a woman contacted them alleging she was physically and sexually abused as a child by several priests, including Robinson, police said. Three other people came forward after Robinson’s arrest claiming they were abused by priests in rituals years ago. Authorities reopened the murder case in December based on information in a letter sent to prosecutors, but they would not say who sent the letter or what it contained.

ctai dhakka

Officials say wait to get Medicare card

By TARA BURGHART
AP WRITER

YORKVILLE, Ill. (AP)—Norma Yeates, looking for a way to shave her husband’s \$385-a-month prescription drug bill, learned she has a lot of homework ahead before signing up for one of the new Medicare discount cards. As the Bush administration heralded the opening of enrollment for the cards on Monday, it added a cautionary note to Yeates and others: Don’t sign up just yet.

Yeates, 70, walked away with a thick stack of brochures describing her choices after she and 200 other elderly patients met at a forum here with House Speaker Dennis Hastert and Medicare chief Mark McClellan. Her next move is to draw up a detailed chart to help figure out which one of 47 discount cards will save the Naperville, Ill., couple the most money.

“I think most seniors will at first say, ‘Oh, I can’t do this.’ But when they sit down, they can do it,” Yeates said. “We’ve been grocery shoppers all our lives, we’ve bought car insurance. This is just a new wrinkle.”

The cards, which cannot be used until June 1, are designed to deliver savings on seniors’ monthly drug bills by encouraging competition among pharmacies, insurance companies and drug companies. Some critics

have questioned whether savings will be significant.

The forum at the Kendall County Senior Center was sponsored by Rep. Hastert, R-Ill. Hastert, McClellan, Senate Majority Bill Frist, R-Tenn., and other Republican lawmakers and administration officials fanned out across the country Monday to promote the new cards, the first widely available benefit from the Medicare prescription drug law enacted last year.

At an event in Washington, Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson called the cards “a giant step forward on the road to savings,” especially for low-income older and disabled Americans who qualify for a \$600 subsidy.

Thompson predicted that card sponsors and pharmaceutical companies will be watching Medicare’s new prescription price comparison Web site and will lower prices to attract Medicare recipients. “They are going to be very, very cognizant of what other people are charging,” he said.

Enrollment forms are available from card sponsors, Medicare and some pharmacies.

Acknowledging there will be “a few bumps in the road,” Thompson encouraged people to compare prices for a couple of weeks before signing up for one of 40 national and 33 regional cards. Once enrolled, people cannot change cards

until the end of the year.

He dismissed a call from Democrats for a 30-day grace period in which card holders could change their minds because of the program’s complexity and possible addition of more card sponsors in coming weeks.

“They have already put the wrong information up on the Web site,” said House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi of California. “I told you it was complex, that it would take a long time. They haven’t even gotten it right themselves.”

Hastert and McClellan answered some basic questions about the program: It is voluntary and the enrollment fee ranges from free to \$30. The most appropriate card for a person depends on what drugs the person takes, where the person lives and whether he or she is open to getting drugs through the mail.

“People say that seniors will never be able to understand this,” Hastert said. “I tell you what, you’re the best shoppers in the world, with the time and ability to take a look. You know what your needs are, you know what’s available out there.”

The atmosphere of the question-and-answer session turned frosty when Carol Applebaugh, 67, stood up in the audience and said she could find no cost savings on several popular drugs in her research through Medicare’s Web site.

hamilton



shell



World

Pipeline blast slashes Iraq's oil exports

KARBALA, Iraq (AP)—Insurgents blasted an oil pipeline, setting off a huge blaze and slashing Iraq's daily oil exports by about 25 percent. U.S. troops traded gunfire Monday with fighters loyal to radical cleric Muqtada al-Sadr in this Shiite city south of Baghdad.

American tanks and helicopters destroyed al-Sadr's headquarters in the Baghdad neighborhood of Sadr City in weekend clashes. U.S. officials said 35 Iraqis were killed before fighting ended just before dawn Monday.

Later Monday, a large but distant explosion was heard in central Baghdad, and Al Jazeera television reported renewed clashes in Sadr City. The U.S. command had no comment.

In a statement broadcast by Lebanon's Al Manar television, the "political forces of Sadr City" appealed to U.S. authorities to stop attacks on the district and to "peacefully solve this conflict without violence, terrorism and extreme cruelty."

An aide to al-Sadr vowed Monday to step up the campaign against the U.S.-led occupation.

"The second phase of the fight has not been born yet," the aide, Hossam al-Husseini, said in the southern city of Najaf, where al-Sadr has taken refuge. "This is a struggle for independence. It will end when the Americans leave Iraq." Elsewhere, U.S. Marines entered the restive city of Fallujah on Monday for the first time since a bloody, three-week siege ended last month. The Marines, accompanied by Iraqi forces, remained in the city for about an hour and left without incident.

Three more American soldiers have died in Iraq—two from hostile fire and one in a traffic accident.

One soldier from Task Force Olympia, based in northern Iraq, died Monday after an attack on his patrol, U.S. command said in a statement. It did not say when the attack took place.

Red Cross: Iraq abuse widespread, routine

By ALEXANDER G. HIGGINS
AP WRITER

GENEVA (AP)—Up to 90 percent of Iraqi detainees were arrested "by mistake," according to coalition intelligence officers cited in a Red Cross report disclosed Monday. It also says U.S. officers mistreated inmates at the notorious Abu Ghraib prison by keeping them naked in dark, empty cells.

Abuse of Iraqi prisoners by American soldiers was widespread and routine, the report finds—contrary to President Bush's contention that the mistreatment "was the wrongdoing of a few."

While many detainees were quickly released, high-ranking officials in Saddam Hussein's government, including those listed on the U.S. military's deck of cards, were held for months in solitary confinement.

Red Cross delegates saw U.S. military intelligence officers mistreating prisoners under interrogation at Abu Ghraib and collected allegations of abuse at more than 10 other detention facilities, including the military intelligence section at Camp Cropper at Baghdad International Airport and the Tikrit holding area, according to the report.

The 24-page document cites abuses—some "tantamount to torture"—including brutality, hooding, humiliation and threats of "imminent execution."

"These methods of physical and psychological coercion were used by the military intelligence in a systematic way to gain confessions and extract information and other forms of cooperation from persons who had been arrested in connection with suspected security offenses or deemed to have an 'intelligence value.'"

High-ranking officials were singled out for special treatment, according to the report, which the International Committee of the Red Cross confirmed as authentic after it was published by The Wall Street Journal on Monday.

"Since June 2003 over a hundred 'high value detainees' have been held for nearly 23 hours a day in strict solitary confinement in small concrete



U.S. soldiers keep a close watch as journalists visit and film some parts of the Abu Ghraib prison where high risk detainees are held, Monday, May 10, 2004, at the Abu Ghraib prison on the outskirts of Baghdad.

AP

Contractor: Army happy with interrogators

ARLINGTON, Va. (AP)—The chief executive of a defense contractor that provides civilian interrogators to the scandal-ridden Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq said the Army is pleased with its work and that its employees fully understand they are under military authority.

"It's been reported to us that we're doing a fine job. That's from our customer (the Army), and those are the people who count," J.P. "Jack" London said Monday in a telephone interview.

One of CACI International Inc.'s

interrogators was criticized in an internal Army report for helping to facilitate the physical and sexual abuse documented against detainees at the Abu Ghraib prison.

London said last week's congressional hearings with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and others bolster the company's contention that its employees operate under close supervision and direct control of military personnel.

"Our workers have no supervisory authority," London said. "We

are not in the chain of command. We never have been in the chain of command. We don't want to be in the chain of command."

He also said the company is continuing its own investigation, and cooperating with military investigators, but that CACI still has received no formal notice from the Pentagon about any improper conduct.

Some critics of the government's increased reliance on contractors say the practice leads to a lack of accountability and oversight.

cells devoid of daylight," says the report. "Their continued internment several months after their arrest in strict solitary confinement constituted a serious violation of the third and fourth Geneva Conventions."

It did not say who the detainees were,

but an official who discussed the report with the Red Cross told The Associated Press they include some of the 55 top officials in Saddam's regime named in the deck of cards given to troops.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said detainees held at

Baghdad International Airport include many of the 44 "deck of cards" suspects already captured. It was not clear if Saddam was at the airport, but the Red Cross has said it visited him in coalition detention somewhere in Iraq last month.

kambara

Slain Chechen president Kadyrov buried

By YURI BAGROV
AP WRITER

VLADIKAVKAZ, Russia (AP)—Chechen President Akhmad Kadyrov was buried in his home village Monday, one day after his death in a bomb attack that dealt a new blow to Russia's efforts to control the separatist republic.

His son—the widely feared former chief of his security service—was named to a top government post.

Crowds of mourners converged on Tsentoroi, the Kadyrov clan's home village in the southeastern Chechen foothills, for a traditional burial ceremony, including singing and circles of men slowly dancing.

Kadyrov's assassination in an explosion at a stadium where Victory Day celebrations were being held Sunday in the Chechen capital, Grozny, raised fears of a harsh crackdown by Russian forces.

Nobody claimed responsibility for the attack, which killed at least five other people, but suspicion inevitably fell on separatist rebels, who are fighting Russian soldiers as well as Chechen police and security forces.

Aslan Maskhadov, who was Chechnya's president when it had de-facto independence in 1996-99, condemned the bombing, according to a separatist Web site. He was quoted as saying he suspected it was planned by Russian security services "to liquidate the marionette government."

Russian officials were investigating how the powerful explosive was planted and detonated, ripping through the stadium grandstand where Kadyrov and other dignitaries watched the ceremony.

In all six people were killed and 57 injured, said Chechnya's Deputy Minister of Emergency Situations, Akhmed Dzheirkhanov. Earlier estimates



Chechen men wearing ethnic hats pray during a traditional burial ceremony for their slain Moscow-backed leader President Akhmad Kadyrov, in the Tsentoroi settlement that is home to Kadyrov's clan, southeastern Chechnya, Monday, May 10, 2004.

put the death toll much higher. Other victims included Khusein Isayev, the head of Chechnya's

State Council, and Reuters photographer Adlan Khasanov. The top Russian military com-

mander in Chechnya, Col.-Gen. Valery Baranov was wounded and had a leg amputated.

The bombing—which thwarted heavy security in place for official ceremonies nationwide on an important holiday—underscored the difficulties Russia faces in controlling the violence in Chechnya despite a massive troop presence. It was expected to spark new violence between Kadyrov's camp and his enemies, who had long pledged to eliminate him.

Kadyrov's son Ramzan, who was named Chechnya's first deputy premier on Monday, heads a security force that many Chechens and human rights groups allege is responsible for abducting and abusing civilians.

The U.N. Security Council said in a formal statement that it "unequivocally condemns the terrorist bomb attack" and "reaffirms that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security."

Israeli forces enter Gaza, 2 gunmen killed

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP)—Israeli forces entered Gaza City early Tuesday and exchanged fire with Palestinian gunmen, killing two, in an operation the Israelis said was aimed at the "terrorist infrastructure" in the city.

Six Israeli tanks and 10 jeeps entered the Zeitoun neighborhood, the residents said. Soldiers took up positions on the roofs of three houses, surrounding one of them, and traded gunfire with armed Palestinians.

Before daybreak an Israeli helicopter fired a missile at a group of men, killing one and

wounding nine, three critically, witnesses and doctors said. In earlier exchanges of fire, one Palestinian gunman was killed and nine people were wounded, at least four of them armed, they said.

Palestinians also said some soldiers entered the city in civilian vehicles.

Israeli bulldozers cut the coastal road, piling up sand barriers, witnesses said.

The Israeli military would say only that an operation was in progress, aimed at the "terrorist infrastructure" in Gaza City.

The Zeitoun neighborhood,

across from the isolated Jewish settlement of Netzarim, is known as a stronghold of Islamic militant groups.

Israeli forces frequently enter cities and towns in the Gaza Strip, trying to arrest or kill members of militant groups and destroy workshops where weapons, including crude mortars and rockets, are made.

In another part of Gaza, several Israeli tanks and bulldozers entered the Rafah refugee camp on the Egyptian border and tore down a structure, residents said. Israeli forces often enter the camp, looking

for arms-smuggling tunnels.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon proposed a plan called "unilateral disengagement" that would have included an Israeli pullout from Gaza, though the military would still target violent Palestinian groups there.

However, Sharon's Likud Party turned the plan down in a nonbinding referendum on May 2, and its future is in doubt.

On Monday, the Palestinian Authority decided to hold its first-ever municipal elections, dropping a key demand that Israeli forces withdraw from cities and towns first.

Cuba is freezing most of its sales in dollars

HAVANA (AP)—Cuban officials announced Monday they were freezing most sales in dollars in response to new U.S. proposals aimed at toppling the government of President Fidel Castro.

Sales of goods at dollar stores, except for food and hygiene products, "are suspended until further notice," announcers on state television announced.

The announcement was described as a reaction to "brutal and cruel" measures proposed last week by a U.S. presidential commission as ways to hasten the fall of Cuba's communist system.

The statement said the U.S. proposals "are directly aimed at strangling our development and reducing to a minimum the resources in hard currency that are essential for the necessities of food, medical and educational services and other essentials."

The scope of the measure and details of its implementation were not immediately clear.

Many Cubans depend on dollar stores to supply goods

unavailable at state shops since the economic collapse that followed the disintegration of the Soviet bloc in the early 1990s.

A presidential commission recommended Thursday that the United States take steps to subvert the planned succession in Cuba under which power would pass from Castro to his younger brother, Raul.

Based on the report, Bush outlined several immediate actions, including restricting family visits by Cuban-Americans to once every three years instead of the current one-per-year. He retained the \$1,200-a-year limit on dollar transfers that Cuban-American families can send to the island.

He also restricted remittances and gift parcels to immediate family members. Recipients could not include "certain Cuban officials and Communist Party members."

The authorized per diem amount for a family visit was lowered to \$50, compared with \$164 now.

UN: Colombia is humanitarian catastrophe

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—The drug-fueled war in Colombia has created the worst humanitarian crisis in the Western hemisphere, with more than 2 million people displaced and Indian tribes threatened with extinction, the U.N. humanitarian chief said Monday.

In the last four years, the number of people forced to flee their homes has increased by about 1 million, Undersecretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Jan Egeland said. Colombia now has the third-largest number of displaced people in the world - behind Congo and Sudan, he said.

"Colombia is therefore by far the biggest humanitarian catastrophe of the Western hemisphere," Egeland told a news conference. It also has the most killing in the Western Hemisphere, and the longest war—waged for 39 years, he said.

Colombia's war pits two leftist guerrilla groups

against government forces and right-wing paramilitaries. At least 3,500 people, mainly civilians, die in the fighting every year.

Egeland, a former U.N. special adviser in Colombia, recently spent four days visiting displaced people living in shantytowns outside Cartagena on the Atlantic coast and near Bogota.

In the last year, the number of kidnappings and assassinations have gone down, but the "humanitarian situation is worsening" because poor Colombians are being attacked by armed groups and are forced to flee their homes, he said.

"This leads to people going from the countryside to towns and cities where they stay in shantytowns" without access to education, health care or adequate shelter, he said.

In the shantytown outside Cartagena, he said, "I just felt it was 10,000 people floating around in a sea of sewage and garbage."



Brazil president denies drinking problem

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil (AP)—The office of President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva angrily denied a published report that he has a drinking problem, calling it "calumny and defamation."

"It's infamy," Vice President Jose Alencar added Monday. "President Lula is a good man. All of us Brazilians have to be indignant."

Silva, Brazil's first working-class president, has never hidden his affection for alcohol, appearing on occasion with a glass of beer or whiskey. He has never been known to be drunken in public, however.

The nature of his drinking, a subject of speculation among local journalists, attracted particular attention after The New York Times published an article Sunday under the headline "Brazilian Leader's Tipping Becomes National Concern."

"We do not consider this article to be valid journalism," presidential spokeswoman Marcia Ornelas said. "It is a piece of calumny and defamation and shows a prejudice against the president."

She said the president's office was considering legal action.

Georgian police recover stolen painting

TBILISI, Georgia (AP)—Police have recovered a 16th-century German painting stolen a decade ago from the Georgian Art Museum, the independent TV channel Imedi reported Monday.

The painting "Procureess," by Lucas Cranach the Elder, was found in the capital, Tbilisi, Interior Minister Georgy Baramidze told Imedi. He declined to give further information, saying details would be released Tuesday.

Cranach's paintings, many of them assessed as worth millions of dollars, have been targets of theft in several countries.

Jordanian court convicts three militants

AMMAN, Jordan (AP)—The nephew of an Osama bin Laden lieutenant shouted "Allah will punish you, tyrants!" at military judges Monday after they sentenced him and two accomplices to three years of hard labor for conspiring to attack American and Israeli tourists in Jordan.

The court convicted the men of conspiring to attack Jordanian sights frequented by Americans and Israelis. The men were arrested a year ago, and no attacks were carried out.

Presiding judge Col. Fawaz Buqour said the cell's alleged mastermind, 19-year-old Omar Sayel al-Khalayleh, was influenced by the militant ideology of his uncle, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, a lieutenant of Osama bin Laden, the al-Qaida chief.

He did not say whether there was a direct link in the men's plot to al-Zarqawi, as prosecutors had alleged.

"Allah will punish you, tyrants!" al-Khalayleh shouted at the three judges after the verdict.

He and his co-defendants—Hamza Mohammed Al-Momani, 20, and police Cpl. Ayman al-Khawaldeh, 25—yelled that Jordan was an "American spy"—a common slogan among terror suspects who allege that Jordan is prosecuting them to boost its standing with the United States.

Campus Life

Life & Style

Many 'American Idol' losers winning big

By KARU F. DANIELS
FOR THE AP

Acidic tongue-lashings from "American Idol" judge Simon Cowell could deflate anyone's musical aspirations, but many "Idol" losers are finding that second-chance success isn't a bad consolation prize.

As the third season of Fox's hugely successful reality contest gears up for the May 26 finale, numerous former contestants—some dishonorably discharged—are signing major record deals, appearing on television and singing on Broadway.

The show "has gotten the public captivated," said Geoff Mayfield, director of charts for the Billboard music-industry magazine. "I think that the viewers feel an investment in 'American Idol.' Now, I kind of take it as a matter of course that this is an event that sells music."

And jump-starts careers:

William Hung, the laughingstock of the third season, already has an album out. The 31-year-old engineering student performs comical covers of popular tunes by R. Kelly, Elton John, The Beach Boys, Enrique Iglesias and, of course, the Ricky Martin numbers that made him infamous.

In its first week, the CD cracked Billboard's Top 40, selling more than 38,000 copies. The self-proclaimed "Real American Idol" has appeared on everything from "The Today

Show" to "The Tonight Show," and even sang at a nationally televised NBA game. On May 15 he's scheduled to share the same stage as Jessica Simpson, Lenny Kravitz, OutKast and Janet Jackson at the Wango Tango Music Festival at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, Calif.

Although Hung's popularity is based on his awfulness, "you can't blame a person for taking an opportunity," said season two finalist Kimberley Locke. "That's why we all do it."

Locke just released her debut album, "One Love," on Curb Records, home of country superstars Tim McGraw, Wynonna Judd and LeAnn Rimes.

She admits that "Idol" has accelerated her career. "For the rest of my life I'll have to talk about 'American Idol,' which is a good thing because I'm proud to have been a part of the show," she said.

RJ Helton, the top-five finalist from season one, released his debut album, the Christian-oriented "Real Life," on B Rite/Zomba last month. The Latin crooner is managed by Beyonce's father, Matthew Knowles.

"Just because we didn't win the show doesn't mean that we didn't think we were going to continue, by any means," Helton said.

Former child star Marque Lynche, who got the boot on



William Hung, a reject from Fox's "American Idol" talent show, waves to the crowd after performing a song at halftime of the New Orleans Hornets-Miami Heat NBA first-round playoff game in New Orleans Sunday, May 2, 2004.

AP

February 10, recently joined the off-Broadway musical "Fame On 42nd Street," based on the popular 1980s film and television show.

"The reason that I got 'Fame' was because (the producers) saw

me on the show and they said (I) was perfect for this role," said Lynch, 23, who was seen as a child on the "All New Mickey Mouse Club" alongside Britney Spears and Justin Timberlake. "It did give me a platform to

kind of be a quasi-celebrity and go in with a little bit of a name. So it makes it a little bit easier to do what I do."

Other contestants taking on theatrical gigs include Vanessa Olivarez from season one,

currently playing the lead in the Toronto version of the hit Broadway musical "Hairspray," and season two semifinalist Trenyce, who recently wrapped a national tour with "Not A Day Goes By," based on the best-selling E. Lynn Harris novel.

And then there's Frenchie Davis—clearly Ruben and Clay's biggest competition from season two. The voluptuous vocal powerhouse, bounced after her pictures surfaced on an adult web site, is on board for another run in the Pulitzer Prize-winning Broadway musical "Rent" this summer. She recently performed a leading role in the touring company of the legendary musical "Dreamgirls," and she's negotiating a record deal.

Despite all the hype, "Idol" does have plenty of detractors who decry the way it churns out ready-made pop confections.

"I think that it's an interesting little way of creating, I don't want to say stars, but creating people who can be within the record business at this time when nobody is buying records," laments Rolling Stone critic and contributing editor Toure. "But this is not the way of creating lasting stars."

But it's a foot in the door, which is all today's hopefuls are asking for.

Passion' debuts on DVD in August

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ" will be released on DVD on Aug. 31. The actor-director's company, Icon Productions, announced Monday that it has partnered with 20th Century Fox for the home-video distribution.

Gibson's company couldn't persuade any of the major Hollywood studios, including Fox, to distribute the movie, which was released in theaters on Feb. 25, Ash Wednesday on the Roman Catholic calendar.

It became the year's biggest blockbuster so far, earning a

place among the top 10 highest-grossing movies of all time with more than \$368 million at the North American box office.

Although Fox passed on the theatrical distribution of the film, the studio exercised its "first look deal" with Gibson's company that put it at the head of the line among those who wanted to distribute the DVD.

Asked if the movie's box-office success was a motivator for Fox's DVD interest, Steve Feldstein, spokesman for Fox Home Entertainment, would only say: "We enjoy a strong relationship with Mel

Gibson and everybody at Icon."

Besides the film's violent content, some Jewish organizations objected to the movie, starring Jim Caviezel as Jesus, fearing it would spark a rise in anti-Semitism by blaming ancient Jewish people for killing Christ.

Filmed in Aramaic and Latin, the movie will be presented with English subtitles on VHS and English and Spanish subtitles on DVD.

Feldstein said there will not be any extra features.

"For the consumers and fans of the film, it's going to simply be the film," he said Monday.

Prosecutor: Sizemore violated probation

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Actor Tom Sizemore has violated the terms of probation imposed for abusing ex-girlfriend and former Hollywood madam Heidi Fleiss, a prosecutor said Monday.

Prosecutors allege that Sizemore "tested dirty" for drugs in early March, according to defense attorney Mark Werksman, who filed a response under seal Monday.

"We're asking the court and the public to withhold judgment 'til we have a hearing and have

the opportunity to prove that this allegation is bogus," he said.

Deputy City Attorney Robert Cha said he alleged the probation violation in a motion April 29. He declined to provide specifics, saying only, "I didn't file this motion for no reason, with nothing to support it."

Sizemore, a star of "Black Hawk Down" and "Saving Private Ryan," was sentenced in October to six months in jail on misdemeanor charges of harassing, annoying and physically

abusing Fleiss during the two years that they had a relationship. The judge postponed the jail term to allow Sizemore to complete a live-in program at a drug rehabilitation center.

He is tested for drugs regularly under terms of his probation.

Sizemore is currently in Canada shooting a new police television series, Werksman said. The 42-year-old actor has been tapped to play Pete Rose in an upcoming made-for-television movie called "Hustle."

Ballet school changes Potter-like routine

LONDON (AP)—There'll be no wave of the magic Harry Potter wand for the 3-year-old students of a ballet school in southern England.

Choreographer Valerie Le Serve said Monday she was forced to change a 10-minute segment based on the adventures of the boy wizard and his friends after author J.K. Rowling's agent pointed out a contract with movie giant Warner Bros. that bans rival productions.

Le Serve said she wrote to Rowling's London-based agent, Christopher Little, as a courtesy and was surprised to receive a letter banning her from going ahead with the amateur event in Worthing, West Sussex.

Warner Bros., which produces the hit "Harry Potter" movies based on the books, has rights over any live theatrical or musical production until 2007.

"Sadly the position is that contractually we are

precluded from granting the type of rights requested by the Worthing dance school unless Warner Bros. relent and waive their rights," said Neil Blair, a spokesman for Little. "It is simply not possible for us to pick and choose however worthy the cause, which in this particular case was clearly most worthy."

Britain: No hasty probe of Iraq prisoner abuse claims

Le Serve's production was scheduled as part of a variety show in November to raise money for London's Great Ormond Street Hospital for children and the Cleft Lip and Palate Association.

Le Serve said she would adapt the costumes of black cats, owls and wand-carrying street traders to another story line.

"I could not believe it. Friends said J.K. and her agents would not mind, but it appears they do," she said. "I am flattered that they consider us to be such a great threat to their plans in 2007."

Don Johnson accused of not paying bill



Kate Beckinsale and Len Wiseman arrive for the Vanity Fair's post-Oscar party on February 29, 2004, in Los Angeles.

ASPEN, Colo. (AP)—An Aspen grocery store has accused actor Don Johnson of leaving an unpaid bill of \$5,470, according to court records.

Other Aspen businesses also are suing the "Miami Vice" and "Nash Bridges" star in Pitkin County Court for outstanding bills. A list of creditors in a bankruptcy petition include \$7,345 from Aspen Valley Hospital, \$1,228 from Isberian Rug Co., \$1,688 from Holy Cross Energy and \$2,787 from Garfield & Hecht law firm.



Johnson

A spokesman for the actor could not be reached for comment.

Johnson, 54, filed for bankruptcy protection last month to secure his Woody Creek ranch and stave off a lender's attempt to auction his home.

The lender, Los Angeles-based City National Bank, filed court papers in Pitkin County District Court in March against Johnson. That lawsuit asks a judge to auction Johnson's home to recoup \$930,000 he owes the bank, according to court papers.

Beckinsale marries director Wiseman

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Actress Kate Beckinsale and "Underworld" director Len Wiseman were married in a small weekend ceremony at the lush Bel-Air Hotel.

The couple recited wedding vows Sunday in what publicist Troy Nankin described as an "intimate" ceremony. Beckinsale wore a Vera Wang gown, Nankin said Monday. No other details were released.

It was the first marriage for both.

Beckinsale's films include "Van Helsing," "Underworld" and "Pearl Harbor."

Wiseman, a music video director for En Vogue and Megadeth, made his feature-film debut with last fall's "Underworld." He's now working on an untitled sequel with Beckinsale again in the starring role.

Woman is at a loss for words to explain husband's sentence

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: My husband, "Cliff," is in prison and we're not sure when he'll be out. We have two wonderful children, ages 11 and 13. We are allowed to visit him six times a month and can talk with him on the phone up to four times a week. Despite his incarceration, he is as involved as he can be in our lives.

I have a problem when meeting new people who ask where my husband is. The stigma of having a husband in jail is not something I want to carry in the small town where we live. Plus, I don't think it is something our children's friends should know because they might taunt them.

As happens more times than we'd like to think in this country, my husband was wrongfully convicted, and the explanation is a lengthy one. So, short of telling each person the whole story, what reply can I come up with when asked the whereabouts of my husband?

NEEDS AN ANSWER IN OHIO

DEAR NEEDS AN ANSWER: You could tell your neighbors that you and your husband are having a "trial" separation — but please be aware that the cat will be out of the bag the minute one of your children confides their father's whereabouts to a close friend. In a small town, there are very few secrets.

DEAR ABBY: I am 12 and have lived in Texas all my life, until a few months ago when we moved to Las Cruces, N.M. My younger sister, "Janey," and I didn't want to move, but Mother met "Patrick" online and fell in love. We moved to Las Cruces so they could be together and get married someday.

I like Patrick because he's nice to us, but Janey and I don't get along with his daughter, "Rita." She is 15, and says we have stolen her time with her dad. She is jealous because he pays attention to us, and she can't have him all to herself.

Please tell me how I can let her know we're not stealing her father and that he still loves her.

STRESSED IN LAS CRUCES

DEAR STRESSED: As much as you might wish to put Rita's fears to rest, the person who must reassure her is her father. Tell Patrick privately what you have told me. Or better yet, clip this letter and tell him you wrote it. If he's unable to allay his daughter's concerns, some sessions with a family counselor would be a wise investment.

DEAR ABBY: My daughter is 12 and starting to want to wear makeup. She is quite a tomboy and would rather play basketball than do "girly" things.

She wore makeup to the movies last weekend, and her father was very upset. He ordered her not to do it again. She tells me kids are making comments about her because she doesn't dress like a girl or wear makeup. Abby, I don't see anything wrong with her wearing it once in a while.

What's your take on this? Is her dad right, or am I being too easy? Is there a compromise?

MOM IN NEW YORK

DEAR MOM: Get a cold compress for your husband, because I have news for him. His little girl is growing up, and right on schedule. Now, I don't know how much makeup your daughter wore to the movies, but for someone her age to wear lip gloss and a little mascara is not unusual. Moderation is the key.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more attractive person, order "How to Be Popular." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

Campbell pleads guilty to drunken driving

PHOENIX (AP)—Country singer Glen Campbell pleaded guilty Monday to extreme drunken driving and leaving the scene of an accident.

Under the plea agreement in Maricopa County Superior Court, Campbell faces 10 days in jail when he is formally sentenced June 14. He'll be eligible for work furlough after 48 hours and is expected to serve 75 hours of community service under the deal.

An aggravated assault charge was dropped.

Campbell was arrested in November near his Phoenix home after leaving the scene of a minor traffic accident. He was accused of kneeling a police officer after being taken into custody. The officer wasn't hurt.

Extreme drunken driving applies to a blood-alcohol level of 0.15 or higher. Police said breath tests on Campbell showed he had a 0.20 blood-alcohol level at the time of his arrest. The legal limit for Arizona drivers is 0.08.

The 68-year-old singer has lived in Arizona for more than two decades. His hits include "Rhinestone Cowboy," "Galveston," "Gentle on My Mind" and "By the Time I Get to Phoenix."

Shoving match erupts during 50 Cent show

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. (AP)—Police broke up a shoving match at a Springfield club after rapper 50 Cent and his entourage jumped from the stage during a surprise appearance and scuffled in the audience.

Two people were arrested for disturbing the peace at the Hippodrome club early Saturday morning, said Springfield Police Capt. Charles Arpin.

Police also were investigating whether a nearby shooting was related.

The crowd of 1,400 people didn't know 50 Cent was there until he took the stage after other acts. About 10 minutes later, someone in the crowd threw water at him from a cup or a bottle, Hippodrome co-owner Michael J. Barrasso said.

"He removed his gold chain, handed it to someone on the stage next to him and jumped off the stage into the crowd," Barrasso said. The rapper's entourage, including bodyguards, also jumped off the stage.

The audience was so dense, Barrasso couldn't tell whether



AP

Rap artist 50 Cent, whose real name is Curtis Jackson, performs after receiving the award for the best artist of 2003, during the 2003 World Music Awards ceremony in Monaco, in this Oct. 12, 2003 file photo.

there was any fighting beyond pushing. Security guards and police officers pushed the rapper—whose real name is Curtis Jackson—and his entourage back on stage, Barrasso said.

"He finished the song, believe it or not," Barrasso said. "Then the whole entourage and him just rushed for the exit, got in their cars and left."

Two men were charged with disturbing the peace.

Afterward, a man walked into the Mercy Medical Center emergency room with a gunshot wound to the leg, saying he'd been shot about a block from the theater. Arpin said police aren't certain whether the shooting was related to the disturbance to the Hippodrome.

Charley Pride recovering after surgery

DALLAS (AP)—Country singer Charley Pride is expected to make a full recovery following brain surgery last week, his personal manager said Monday.

Pride, 66, was hospitalized Wednesday for a subdural hematoma, a blood clot that occurs when blood from a torn vessel collects between the brain and the skull.

He had sought treatment after experiencing severe headaches, his manager, John Daines, said. The surgery was performed Saturday at an undisclosed hospital.

Daines said Pride was alert and awake when he visited him Monday morning. He's expected to make a complete recovery and could be released from the hospital Tuesday, Daines said.

"He wants to go back to work," Daines told The Associated Press.

Pride's nine-show, 12-day tour of Canada scheduled to start this week has been rescheduled for August, said Daines. Pride will take four to six weeks off and recover at his Dallas home.

The singer's hits include "All I Have to Offer You (Is Me)" and "Kiss an Angel Good Morning."

Pastimes

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-800-228-5955! \$0.99 per minute. Watch today's pictures. The only King Features service. NYT.

MAKE-A-WISH

Help us spread the magic. Call 1-800-955-1234. We'll make your child's wish come true. For more information, visit www.makeawish.com. **SAIPAN TRIBUNE**

Ziggy®

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY

Justin Jeffre, Sean Astin, Lesley Boone, Sally Jessy Raphael

HAPPY BIRTHDAY: Having a crusader attitude will make all the difference in the world this year. Be a little stubborn if you think you are right. Be diverse in all that you do and you will meet the demands being put on you and accomplish your goals. Your numbers are 2, 13, 17, 29, 31, 40

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD
IN ASTROLOGY



COPYRIGHT 2004 UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



ARIES (March 21-April 19)

Push to make others aware of what you are doing and how you believe it will help everyone on some level. If you can sell your ideas to others, you will put yourself in a favorable position. □□□



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

This is a perfect day to make some much-needed adjustments. Opportunities will manifest themselves in the most unusual places, so don't hesitate to talk about your dreams. □□□



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

Keeping a secret will be of utmost importance today. By disclosing what you are up to, you could blow a deal or your cover. Work by yourself; question your motives. □□□



CANCER (June 21-July 22)

Do something creative today that can be used to benefit others. The more you do to help make reforms, the better. □□□□



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

You will be misled if you are too gregarious. Tone down and observe what others are doing. Advancement may be at stake. □□



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

You can find an ideal romantic partner if you get out and do things that interest you. Get involved in talks that will stimulate your mind and broaden your perspective about projects you want to pursue. □□□□□



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

Prepare yourself well so that you can follow through with what's necessary as quickly as possible. Don't be lazy or waste time thinking about what you should be doing. □□□



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

Partnerships will be a little hard to handle if you don't take precautions and fully prepare. You can get on with your plans and get the praise you deserve. □□□



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

Your work ethics will pay off, so roll up your shirtsleeves and work alongside others for best results. Your team-player approach will put you in a leadership position. □□□



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

You should be developing your ideas today. If you find someone particularly inspiring, spend time discussing your plans together. Love and romance will be on your doorstep. □□□□□



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

Take the initiative to follow what you feel is the best path and refrain from being led astray. Prepare to take a pass on what others are asking of you. □□



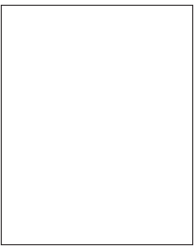
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

Your involvement in good causes will be rewarded today. You will begin to see the results of a job well done. Someone unusual, but interesting, will want to get to know you better. □□□□

BIRTHDAY BABY: You are proactive and never take the conventional route. Your outgoing nature always leads to adventure and excitement. You will chase your dreams until you reach your destiny.

Check out Eugenia's Web sites at astroadvice.com and eugenialast.com.

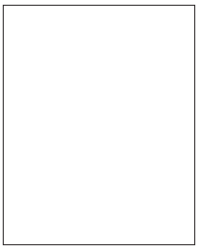




27

Saipan Tribune Sports

25



28 THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2003

SAIPAN TRIBUNE